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TRAINING A SPIRIT-FILLED MINISTRY

THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor

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Published in March, June, September, and December.

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The President's Letter*

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS

Rapid transformations are now being made on the campus of Asbury Theological Seminary. An expenditure of approximately thirty thousand dollars has been made in securing additional property for the enlargement of the campus. The enlargement of the campus grew out of the necessity for additional room for the new building program.

Three of the new buildings are to be grouped together with connecting corridors in the Morrison Quadrangle. The central building will be the Morrison Memorial Administration Building. The other two buildings of the quadrangle will be a library building for fifty thousand volumes, and a Chapel with a seating capacity of five hundred. The fourth building will be a memorial to Mrs. H. C. Morrison, affectionately known as "Aunt Betty."

The Administration Building will cost approximately one hundred fifty thousand dollars. The foundation for this building is now complete and the structural steel is being erected for the remaining stories. The foundation for the Memorial Building to Mrs. Morrison, which is an apartment house for married students, is in the course of construction. The excavation has been made for the foundation of the Library Building. The initial construction on the Chapel is expected to begin during the summer months.

The town of Wilmore has given to the Seminary a valuable lot for the central heating plant which will be built at a cost of twenty-five to thirty thousand dollars. The over all cost of this entire building program is expected to run well over half a million dollars.

Another important development on the new and enlarged campus is the erection of twenty government housing units for GI men. These units will be ready for occupancy by the fall term.

New developments in the Library are among the most significant advances being made by the Seminary. More than ten thousand volumes have been added to the library within the past eighteen months. In addition to these ten thousand volumes which have been added, we now have more than three thousand volumes on order. The library staff deserves the highest commendation for what has been achieved.

New additions to the faculty include Wilder R. Reynolds, Ph.D., who will head the department of Church History, and James W. Robertson, Ph.D., who will be associate professor in the department of Applied Theology. A new department of spiritual counseling for the student body has been created. Clarence Hunter, A.B., B.D., has been employed as
(Concluded on page 39)

*Since the writing of this article, Asbury Theological Seminary has been granted accreditation by the American Association of Theological Seminaries.

Among Ourselves

GEORGE ALLEN TURNER is Professor of English Bible in Asbury Theological Seminary. An alumnus of Greenville College, he holds the degrees of S. T. B. and S. T. M. from The Biblical Seminary in New York, and of Ph.D. from Harvard University. Published here are selected extracts from his doctoral dissertation entitled "A Comparative Study of the Biblical and Wesleyan Ideas of Perfection, to Determine the Sources of Wesley's Doctrine" expressing the results of the investigation.

MARY ALICE TENNEY is Professor of English Literature in Greenville College, Greenville, Illinois. An alumna of Greenville College, Miss Tenney holds the degrees of Master of Arts from the University of California, and of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin.

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The Seat of Authority in Protestantism

There are indications that the historical-critical method of biblical study, with its slavish devotion to the techniques of the scientific method, may be due for some revision from within liberal scholarship. Biblical criticism, particularly the forms which it has assumed in the past two centuries, is an essentially Protestant phenomenon, and as such is a part of a larger problem. The attempt to discover an extra-biblical seat of authority for Christianity, successively in reason and in experience, seems to have rendered necessary some specific handling of Scripture by which a rationalistic explanation might be given for certain features which, as the Scriptures stand, are explicable only upon the basis of their supernatural character.

An objective appraisal of recent criticism yields at least one fairly obvious conclusion, that the method, conscious or unconscious, has been that of 'divide and conquer.' The two Testaments are separated as objects for study. The one is played off against the other. Within the New Testament are supposedly found antithetical groups of writings and opposed modes of thought. It was once fashionable to route heavy traffic across the bridge of a supposed disagreement between Paul and the original disciples. More recently, the Synoptic Gospels have been set in opposition to the Fourth Gospel, while some scholars have declared themselves "more at home in the Gospels than in the Epistles." Again, recent criticism has made much of the supposed fact that the writers of the New Testament subordinated all other considerations to the matter of producing a convincing tract for purposes of Christian 'propaganda.' Presumably the writers were without interest in matters of historical accuracy; thus,

to understand the New Testament, the reader must view its documents as *Tendenz-schriften*, the product of a purpose to convince.

The net result of the bulk of recent criticism has been to obscure the basic homogeneity of the New Testament. The centrifugal tendencies in biblical scholarship have found a culmination in the Form-Critical method, in which the New Testament is fragmented in near-atomic fashion. Emphasizing that which has probably been too largely ignored, namely the *Sitz-in-Leben*, or context in actual life out of which the Christian Gospel came, it has sought to recover the alleged units in which the 'oral tradition' was circulated. Two factors in this movement excite questions: first, is it certain that early Christian preaching made use of granules of recollection concerning Jesus? and second, does not the insistence of Dr. Frederick C. Grant, that the critic must be able to 'feel the pulse' of the documents indicate a degree of subjectivism in Form Criticism which render it questionable?

In protest against this trend toward fragmentation of the Scriptures, the Dialectical Theology has sought, within the general framework of liberalism, to formulate a Biblical Theology which emphasizes the organic unity of the Bible upon the basis of a comprehensive understanding of it as "The Word of God." This movement in theology has sought to recover the basic answers which the Reformers gave to the problem of authority, as they rejected the traditional authoritarianism of Rome. Its thinkers have frequently identified their views with those of the Reformation at this point, and in turn have sought to demonstrate that Luther and Calvin were misrepresented by later Protestant orthodoxy. This contention is, of course,

not new: Auguste Sabatier insisted that a type of Protestant scholasticism grew up to obscure the pure and undefiled religion of the Reformation.

Something will be said concerning this contention at a later point in this editorial. It needs to be pointed out here that theological liberalism is sensing a need for action upon the cue of the dialectical theologians, and that in seeking "to discover and set forth in fresh terms a conception of unity which cannot be disturbed by historical, sociological, or literary findings"¹ it is in reality re-opening the question of authority in the Christian religion.

Current theology is late in its attempt to rediscover the element of integrity in its sacred literature. The Gestalt School has for some years been seeking to effect unification within the heretofore centrifugal movements in psychology. The Existential School has sought to do the same for philosophy, continuing the emphasis of Kierkegaard upon the interaction among the factors in the total human situation. The welcome trend toward a similar unification in the field of biblical study seems to be, in part, a reaction against the extreme subjectivism which has entered into modern biblical criticism. And in reversing the trend in the direction of a biblical theology based upon the conception of the unity of Scripture, criticism must somehow rethink the question of authority in Protestantism, if we be correct in assuming that critical scholarship has been obliged to discount the historicity of Scripture in its quest for an extra-biblical authority in Protestantism.

A volume was published this winter entitled *The Infallible Word, A Symposium*, written by seven professors of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. This book seeks to re-

state the Reformed view of the Scriptures, with special reference to the question of authority. Although the writers deal with a variety of subjects, such as: "The Attestation of Scripture," "The Authority of the Old Testament," "The Authority of the New Testament," "The Transmission of the Text," "Scriptural Preaching," and others, the volume possesses a remarkable degree of unity. This unity is achieved largely by means of the emphasis upon the homogeneity of the Bible as a ground for belief in it as the seat of authority in Christianity.

It is inevitable that such a work should engage in conflict with two groups of thinkers, modern theological liberals, and the dialectical theologians. Understandably enough the writers are allergic to the latter, inasmuch as the Westminster men feel that they (the dialecticians) are incorrect in equating their own views with those of the reformers, especially at the point of belief in the authority of the Christian Scriptures.

The burden of the apologetic of our writers is that "the Scripture possesses binding and ruling authority by reason of what it is objectively, inherently, and qualitatively."² Barth and his followers make a great deal of the inward testimony of the Spirit to Scripture, and confuse this with the inspiration of Scripture. The Westminster men fear this to be a distant echo of Sabatier's fallacious antithesis between a 'religion of authority' and a 'religion of the spirit.' Thus, the Crisis Theology holds that the Bible becomes the Word of God in the *crisis* in which man in confronted by God in judgment-decision. Against this, the writers under review assert that the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Scripture *depends upon* the inspiration of that Scripture. Inspiration is logically prior to the witness of the

¹ LYMAN, Mary Ely, "The Unity of the Bible" in *Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, February, 1946, p. 5.

² *The Infallible Word, A Symposium*, Philadelphia: Guardian Publishing Corporation, (1945), p. 42.

Divine Spirit to Scripture.

In identifying their own views at this point with that of the reformers, the disciples of Barth seek to read back into the statements of Luther and Calvin the essence of the modern subjectivistic dialectic, utilizing the inevitable element of polarity between written Word and witnessing Spirit in their quest for evidence that the sixteenth century Reformation really accorded with their twentieth century views. If this were true, then the orthodox tradition in Protestantism is really a type of scholasticism, in which the more "dynamic" views of the Reformation have been obscured by a view of the Bible as inspired and therefore authoritative which is non-reformation in character.³

The volume under review would be strengthened by more specific quotations from the writings of the reformers at the point of their belief in the full inspiration of Scripture and in its consequent authority. For example, Luther's use of the Bible in the controversy with Zwingli at Marburg is inexplicable upon any other ground than that of his belief that at least the portion speaking of the Eucharist was completely authoritative. The whole of Calvin's *Institutes* would be rendered unintelligible, it seems to the writer, were his views concerning the Bible less positive than those held by classical Protestantism. It is interesting to note that Charles Clayton Morrison attributes this belief to both Luther and Calvin, citing it as an error (from the viewpoint of liberalism) characteristic of the Reformation.⁴

It is refreshing to discover in this

volume a reassertion of the almost-forgotten antithesis between the 'natural man' and the 'spiritual man' as expressed by Paul in *I Cor.* 2:14. Inasmuch as it has been out of fashion to draw any clear line between unregenerate and regenerate, even orthodox Christianity has tended to blur the distinction, forgetting that the question is one which touches deeply the whole matter of the receiving and understanding of Scripture. At the expense of seeming to promulgate 'undemocratic' ideas, one of these writers has made bold to suggest that "the darkness and depravity of man's mind by reason of sin make him blind to the divine excellence of Scripture."⁵ This is plain speech, and serves to point up the truth that the Divine Spirit, bearing testimony to Scripture, also opens the mind to perceive the divine character of His handiwork.

Another important point of emphasis is the distinction which is drawn between the actual authority-content of the Gospel on the one hand, and the testimony of the Spirit to its intrinsic authority on the other. The latter is derived from the former; the former is valid in itself and of itself. The latter, however, renders the Scripture relevant to instinctive needs of the human spirit, "the needs for knowledge, authority, guidance, communion, and sympathy."⁶

Emphasis is thus laid upon the sufficiency of Scripture as a rule for life and practice. Closely related to this is the matter of interpretation; attention is drawn to the distinction between clearness and superficiality. Clarity is, however, a question influenced by the human equation. The 'natural' man lacks the insight necessary to a comprehensive grasp of Scripture. He may possibly find it relevant to some isolated areas of his life. The regenerate man will, however, perceive that

³ An alumnus of Westminster Theological Seminary has written a valuable article dealing in more detail with this same subject. See William Young: "The Inspiration of Scripture in Reformation and in Barthian Theology" in the *Westminster Theological Journal*, Volume VIII, No. 1, November, 1945.

⁴ Morrison, Charles Clayton, "Protestant Misuse of the Bible" in *Christian Century*, June 5, 1946, pp. 712f.

⁵ *The Infallible Word*, p. 46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

the relevance of the Word of God is as wide as the area of His sovereignty.

The authors under review reveal a thorough awareness of the issues which exist between them and modern theological liberalism. Professor Edward J. Young, in his chapter "The Authority of the Old Testament" renders the conservative cause great service in his survey of the question of canonization, in which he feels to reside the crux of the question of the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures. N. B. Stonehouse treats of similar questions in connection with the New Testament. His chapter indicates an acquaintance with the chief movements in recent New Testament criticism; one could wish for an expansion of his argument which would come to grips with Form Criticism.

Especially rewarding to the reader is the chapter by John H. Skilton, "The Transmission of the Scriptures." This writer has done exceedingly careful work, and faces the problems involved in this important phase of the question with the type of reverent open-mindedness which ought to characterize the one seeking the truth at this point.

The final chapter, "Nature and Scripture" by Cornelius Van Til deals with the problem of the relation existing between the two forms of revelation. He does so with particular reference to the Westminster Confession, and may therefore be expected to deal with such questions as grace and salvation from a distinctly Calvinistic viewpoint. The chapter emphasizes the overall unity of God's revelation, and is least convincing in its assertion that it is the same God who is revealed in both nature and Scripture, but that nature reveals nothing of the grace of God. The solution to the problem is placed in the statement of the Confession that God is "eternal, incomprehensible, most free, most ab-

solute."⁷ Perhaps no more can be expected by way of explanation, but Dr. Van Til proceeds to suggest that natural revelation was supplemented by covenant (especially that with Noah) which is "a limiting notion in relation to the covenant of saving grace."⁸

The chief contribution of the chapter seems to be the continual emphasis upon the inter-relatedness of natural revelation and revelation in Scripture, and the careful study of the original terms of human probation, failure in which necessitated the covenant of grace. Concerning the question of the clearness of natural revelation, the writer puts the onus of the matter where it belongs, namely upon the dullness of the percipient. "It is . . . no easier for sinners to accept God's revelation in nature than to accept God's revelation in Scripture."⁹

Professor Van Til finds the natural theology of Aristotle more hostile to the Reformed position than that of Plato. This is interesting in the light of the fact that the theistic finitists, with whom the writer under discussion would doubtless be in the sharpest disagreement, are chiefly indebted to Plato. It is clear that Dr. Van Til sees Thomism as Enemy Number One of reformed theology. He gives a restrained praise to Kant for the service rendered Christian thought in denying that either univocal or equivocal reasoning can reach a proper view of God. This does not mean that he is in agreement with Kant; indeed, he sees the task of the dialectical theologians in harmonizing Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* with Calvin's *Institutes* as impossible. Barth and Brunner, in satisfying Kant's requirements are denying Calvin and Calvin's God. Van Til is firm here: he asserts that no peace can be made between the Crisis Theology and Reformed Theol-

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

ogy. The former must ultimately destroy reason; the latter, in rejecting autonomous reason, restores reason to its proper place.

Sufficient has been said concerning the Westminster volume to indicate two things: first that there are some elements with which not all would be in full agreement, these elements being those growing out of the specifically Calvinistic views of the writers; and second, that the book contains very much that is to be appre-

ciated and studied with care. In the opinion of the writer, the authors indicate a high degree of reserve at points upon which much remains yet to be said. They are seeking (and it seems with much success) to lay the ghosts which have risen at the mention of the words 'inspiration' and 'authority,' and in so doing have pointed the way to a wholesome conservatism in the understanding of the Bible.

—H. B. K.

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

(Concluded from page 33)

spiritual counselor. His work will begin with the fall term.

The increase in enrollment of the student body for the present year is thirty-one per cent. The increase for each of the two preceding years was twenty-five per cent. The overflow conditions have made it necessary to seek new quarters for the chapel services. The chapel services are now being held in the Presbyterian Church which is adjacent to the campus.

A Holiness Emphasis Week was sponsored by the student body during the spring quarter with Dr. J. L. Brasher as the leader. The results were so gratifying that the students have decided to make Holiness Emphasis Week an annual event in the student activities. A week-end retreat was held for the women students during the spring quarter with very gratifying results in deepening the spiritual life of those who attended. This is another feature which promises to become an annual event. More than three hundred out-of-town ministers and laymen attended the second annual Minister's Conference in February. The attendants at this conference came from New York to Louisiana and most of the intervening states. There is a spirit of alertness on the part of the faculty and the entire student body to the new day of progress and advancement which has come to Asbury Theological Seminary.

The Scriptural Basis of Wesley's Doctrine of Christian Perfection*

GEORGE A. TURNER

The place of Wesley in the history of Protestantism, along with Luther and Calvin, is widely appreciated. The central position of the doctrine of evangelical perfection in his system is often recognized as the distinctive feature of early Methodism. Wesley's acknowledged indebtedness for this doctrine has not been seriously questioned, but little attempt has been made to ascertain the objectivity of Wesley's own statements. Like most Christian leaders he claimed to base this doctrine entirely on the Bible as interpreted in the light of "reason and experience." The proportion in which these several factors influenced him, and the extent to which his claim to Biblical authority can be substantiated, has been a matter of considerable dispute. Many within the Wesleyan tradition think that this part of his theological system is not true to the facts of human nature, that it is not founded on sound Biblical exegesis, and that the results of this emphasis have not justified the importance which Wesley gave to the doctrine. The central purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which Wesley's claim to be "scriptural" can be substantiated.

In the original investigation, part of which is reproduced here, a study of the Biblical literature was followed by a brief survey of literature preceding Wesley giving special attention to some material not covered in other studies. A survey of Wesley's own writings was followed by an attempt

to provide a decisive answer to the question of his use of Biblical sources. A chapter dealing with the subject of perfection critically, in the light of recent theology, concluded the study.

I

SUMMARY OF NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING: WHAT DID THE CHRISTIANS EXPECT?

The Image of God. Later Judaism became increasingly aware of the universality of sin, and Adam's sin was often mentioned in connection with it. The Greeks, from Hesiod to the Stoics, were also pessimistic about the prevalence of evil, and compared their present plight with stories of primeval innocence. While the Platonists spoke of the vision of God the Hebrews thought of that image of God in which man has been originally created. The doctrine of Christian perfection has always been associated with that of original sin and original righteousness. Salvation could not be complete until the lost image was restored. The Christians knew that salvation by grace did not fully restore man's physical powers—not until the resurrection, but were his moral faculties fully restored in this life? Paul's statements afford a basis for an affirmative answer. He spoke of being renewed or transformed in mind and spirit,—restored to the image of God, and "conformed to the image of his Son."¹ Christians were to expect a

*Condensed from a Ph.D. dissertation, (Harvard, 1946).

¹ Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:49; II Cor. 3:18; Col. 1:15-22; 3:10; cf. Eph. 4:23.

restoration to the image of their Creator in this life and, in consequence of purity, a vision of God in the next.²

The Mind of Christ. Paul claimed to have the "mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16) and wanted all Christians to be "like-minded" (Phil. 2:5). Jesus was regarded as perfect and exemplary in every respect and disciples should be like their Master in attitude and deportment (Lu. 6:40). This ideal is completely ethical and is perhaps unique among world religions. The example of Jesus was summoned frequently as both a precedent and a motivation to generosity (II Cor. 8:9), to patience while suffering (I Pet. 2:21, to humility and service (Phil. 2:5-11), and to courage (Heb. 12:2). The perfect Christian would walk as He walked. The rabbinic "Imitation of God"³ is enriched and made more explicit in Christianity by the concept of the "Imitation of Christ."

As justification is concerned with the creation of a Christian, sanctification involves the "Christianizing of the Christian."⁴ It involved not only allegiance but likeness. They could not go beyond the Ideal Life, yet the Ideal Life was not entirely beyond them. They shared the Master's "passion for righteousness, conceived as a cosmic demand."⁵

The Fullness of the Spirit. Theologians of insight have often stressed the importance of keeping in proper perspective the "work of Christ for us" and the "work of the Spirit in us." An exclusive emphasis upon the former is likely to result in the error of Protestant scholasticism — that of

viewing religion as purity of faith rather than purity of life. The danger of the latter is "a pragmatic abyss"—fanaticism.

By the doctrine of the Spirit Christians expressed their conviction that God is at work in the world through the Christian community. The life yielded to the control of the Divine Spirit was regarded as effective to the extent to which it was dedicated. Such a life was not only effective but consecrated and hallowed, and became an instrument used in divine service (II Tim. 2:21).

The life of self-indulgence, especially in *Romans*, stands in constant antithesis to the life in the Spirit. Victory came not so much by the reason dominating the appetites as by a decisive act of renunciation as a result of which the Spirit of God would dominate the life. No alternative is possible—"if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). As self is completely renounced the way is open for the complete "filling" of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). The extent of one's consecration is the measure of the Spirit's hallowing and energizing.

Renewal. Only four times the words *anakainoo* and *anakainosis* are used in the New Testament to indicate the work of the Spirit in the moral transformation of the Christian, but the concept they convey includes the whole subjective side of salvation.⁶

Distinct from Regeneration. The expression, "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5) suggests that "baptismal regeneration" and the work of the Spirit in sanctification are distinct. In many discussions of this subject "regeneration," "sanctification," and "renewal," are synonymous. In Wesleyan teach-

² Mt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; 1 Jn. 3:2.

³ A rabbinic aphorism, "be ye therefore perfect" was a paraphrase of "be ye therefore holy." Hertz, *Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, quoted by P. Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism*, p. 96.

⁴ F. Platt, "Perfection (Christian)," *Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, IX, 728.

⁵ W. E. Hocking, *Living Religions and a World Faith*, p. 26.

⁶ II Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:10 and Rom. 12:1; Tit. 3:5; cf. Heb. 6:6. See B. B. Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, pp. 440ff.

ing regeneration is the positive side of justification and is instantaneous, while sanctification is the gradual work of the Spirit in inner transformation, although there is a time when this process may be consummated instantly in response to faith. If "regeneration" is taken to mean a new beginning and "sanctification" a process of making holy, then the two may be said to be distinct.

Completed in this life. This is the question on which all others depend and for which a final answer is most difficult and likely to be challenged. The preceding pages have indicated that the general trend of this investigation is towards an affirmative answer. The early Christians either did, or did not, believe that a deliverance from all sin was a possibility in this life. In the judgment of the present writer the authors of the New Testament did believe such a deliverance possible. The view that Paul taught that a Christian does not sin subsequent to baptism has not been generally accepted. There is also no ground for the view that the body is incurably evil and that sin must be mortified slowly until death completes the process. This belief did not gain ascendancy until the next century. Much depends upon one's definition of sin.

Mortification or faith. Sanctification was regarded as both a crisis and a process—as gained by both mortification and faith. Evil deeds were to be "mortified" but the dynamic of it was initiated by an act of faith. This "synergism" is well represented in Phil. 2:13 where the command to "work out" proceeds from an initial hallowing of the Spirit, "implicit in justifying faith," which extends to all relations of life.⁷ By making faith central Paul (and Acts) placed the emphasis on divine grace. If, like justifi-

cation, it is by faith, then it may be instantaneous,⁸ and a present possibility.

Conclusion. The total New Testament teaching, if a synthesis is attempted, may be condensed thus: the goal of the Christian in this present life is the fulfilling of Law by love to God and one's neighbor (Mt. 5:45; I Jn. 3:14ff). This necessitates a cleansing of the "heart" from selfish traits (II Cor. 7:1) or "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19) so that the sinful character of the emotional life is vanquished. This is a gift of grace, rather than a reward of self-effort, received by faith (Acts 15:9; 26:18), in Jesus as the sin-bearer (I Jn. 1:2), and is effected by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a complete integration of the personality in Christ and unity within the church (Gal. 2:21; Eph. 4:11-16). It is expressed in effective service (Rom. 12) and culminates in perfect love (I Cor. 13) and union with the divine (Jn. 17).

On the whole the New Testament ideal of perfection, is more of a conviction than an express assertion. It emerges from the following beliefs: (1) sin is not only an act but a principle; (2) this remains in believers; (3) believers have the alternative of either (a) maintaining the "status quo," or (b) going on to "perfection"—purification and maturity in love and grace; (4) God is holy and heaven a holy place, hence sin must be dealt with either in the next life, at death, or in this life; (5) it is during this life that God promises to "save his people from their sins" and to perfect them in love.

Among the world's literature the New Testament best represents an epoch in which a great deal has been caught and crystallized: that human nature is completely redeemable, that God's initiative in that process is the

⁷ Bartlett, "Sanctification," Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, IV, 391.

⁸ N. B. use of the aorist in Rom. 13:14; Col. 1:9; Eph. 6:11.

guaranty of its success, and that the theater of victory over evil is this present life. If these premises be granted, the question as to whether the New Testament teaches a perfection in this life is likely to receive an affirmative answer.

The answer, however, is not found primarily in certain words or passages (neither is it apart from them), but rather, in the import of the whole. The New Testament presents, not a doctrine, but a conviction, that God can make His children like Himself, as they believe on His Son and respond to His Spirit, until every motive is unselfish and every action consistent with the end of holiness. This is not an absolute perfection, but a relative one—man can become well-pleasing to God, as a man. A life is possible in which, by the grace of God, sin is no longer operative and every action is in harmony with the law of love.

When Wesley told his generation that a holy life was the chief end of man, that perfect love was a present possibility, and that this entire sanctification of life was, like justification, received by faith, he had a precedent for it in the New Testament.

II

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION IN PROTESTANTISM

The Pauline and Johannine emphasis on personal sanctity of life was conserved in almost every generation, but often submerged or perverted. The reformers, in their emphasis on the object of faith, and the forensic consequences of faith, stopped short of an adequate emphasis on the inner renewal and transformation of character. More precisely, the ideal of ethical righteousness, which the first reformers vaguely outlined, became obscured in the subsequent debates on

doctrine. Some in the seventeenth century, amid doctrinal acrimony, fanaticism, and degeneration in morals, became aware of the need of personal holiness. This emphasis, while not absent from the Anglican church, became articulate in Fox and in German Pietism. Methodism sought to preserve the *religious* values of its Augustinian heritage, together with the *ethical* values of its Pelagian heritage, in its dual emphasis on justification and sanctification. It seized upon the motto of German pietism—"Christ in us as well as Christ for us," and by means of sermon, song, and testimony, embodied it in "a thousand witnesses." Holiness was taken from the monastery, and from the *collegium* (Herrnhut) and brought to the homes, shops, and chapels of an industrialized nation. It was a bold rebuttal of the assumption that sin and the body are inseparable. In addition, Methodism, as a result of pietistic influence, swung from the "moral influence" theory of atonement associated with Pelagius, the mystics, and William Law, toward the reformers' emphasis on a "vicarious atonement" with its correlative emphasis on grace and faith. Deliverance from sin, consequently, did not necessarily involve pride of achievement.

As in the New Testament the prophetic ideas of perfection were combined with priestly ideas of holiness, so in "the great revival" the priestly ideas of holiness, preserved in Catholicism, and the prophetic emphasis, preserved in Protestantism, converge. Wesley went a long way towards the demonstration that through grace, "du kannst denn du sollst," or, as his successors have said, "God's commands are His enablings." Wesley moralized the traditional Protestant conception of faith. The eighteenth century emphasis on *freedom* was now combined with the traditional emphasis on *grace* to form—"the most distinctive doctrine of Methodism."

III

THE UNIQUE FEATURES IN WESLEY'S DOCTRINE

Again and again Wesley defined perfection as the call of Christians "to love God with all their heart, and to serve Him with all their strength." It was only the relatively incidental points that were new with him and the objects of controversy. The five points in Wesley's doctrine which were unique with him, were: (1) sanctification may be completed in this life, (2) it is distinct from, and subsequent to, regeneration, (3) it comes entirely by faith, (4) it is gradual but is often consummated in a moment, and (5) one may have the "witness of the Spirit" that this has been done in him. In the three aspects of suddenness, its reception only by faith, and the witness of the Spirit, it is like regeneration. The first four points are really one and stand or fall together; they all rest upon the element of entirety. If the process of renewal can, in any sense, be regarded as possible of completion in this life, then all the other points will follow quite naturally.

In this point of entirety alone was Wesley unique. The Catholics said entire sanctification occurred after death—in purgatory. The reformers said it occurred only after the soul was released from an inherently sinful body—at death. The Methodists believed that it could occur in this life without departing from the world to a monastery. Those who identified sanctification and justification were few.

The Entirety of Sanctification. The essential point is whether Wesley was correct in saying that the Bible teaches the possibility of entire sanctification in this life. An affirmative answer is based upon these considerations. In Wesley's definition of terms (1) Sin is (a) an act, (b) a condition, but (c) not an infirmity of body or mind—it is a defect of love.

(2) Perfection is not absolute but relative—that of a man. (3) Perfection involves cessation from inward and outward sin. (4) The Bible nowhere states that the body is essentially sinful and that deliverance from sin is impossible until death. (5) The New Testament does state that deliverance from sin is possible and to be sought. (II Cor. 7:1; I Thess. 5:23). (6) The New Testament exhorts Christians to be like God in holiness and love (E.g., I Jn. 4:12).

When Wesley is allowed to define his terms, and state his qualifications, the Biblical basis for this part of his doctrine is likely to be conceded. This is borne out by the fact that contemporary objections to his doctrine were based more upon theological than upon scriptural grounds. The doctrine stirred deep prejudices, and, in the controversies which followed, there were too few who exemplified the doctrine of perfect love. But Wesley's Biblical basis for the entirety of sanctification stands.

The Second Work of Grace. This feature of Wesley's doctrine is dependent upon the element of entirety. Several factors lead to the emphasis upon this point: (1) the fact that in *theory*, and in *fact*, sinful dispositions remain in those whose sins are forgiven; (2) the conviction that purity of heart and perfect love is a gift of grace and not merely a succession of good works; (3) the inference that if it is a divine gift it may come at any time; and (4) the testimony of many whose deeper religious experience followed the pattern of regeneration, conviction for "inbred sin," full consecration, trust, and present experience of purity, peace, and power.

The Biblical basis for this feature of Wesley's doctrine is not extensive. It is more implicit than explicit; more of an inference than an assertion. Instances in *Acts* of the Holy Spirit coming upon those already converted, to

gether with promises of full deliverance from sins remaining after the water baptism, i.e., "inward sins" such as pride, are taken as implying a second crisis comparable to regeneration. Wesley cited but little Scripture in support of this feature. It was enough for him that God often worked that way and it seemed entirely reasonable that if sin is ever entirely removed from a believer by faith it should be as epochal as forgiveness.

Sanctification by Faith or Works. The Catholics, in popular belief if not in theology, taught, in order, sanctification and justification by good works. Luther taught justification by faith alone and his followers made sanctification to follow. The Anglicans taught justification by faith and sanctification by works.⁹ Wesley was first to state explicitly that sanctification, as well as justification, is by faith alone. If it comes by faith it may come as conditions are met—that is now; if by faith it is a gift of God; if a gift of God it will necessarily be complete and entire. Wesley urged this both against contemporaries who taught that sanctification comes by works,¹⁰ and also those who said that it is completed at justification.

Thus Wesley did for Protestantism what Luther did to Catholicism—he recovered the Pauline emphasis upon grace and faith. Again, it may be said that Wesley taught the Christian, as Luther taught the sinner, that the way "into the holiest" is by faith in Christ alone. Thus, both the *guilt* of sin and the *pollution* of sin is removed by the grace of God in response to repentance and faith. In nothing was Wesley more in line with the tenor of the New Testament than in this feature of his doctrine.

⁹ Richard Hooker, "A Learned Discourse of Justification," in *Ecclesiastical Polity*, I, (Everyman's p. 38).

¹⁰ J. Wesley, *Standard Sermons*, II, 453.

Sanctification: Gradual or Instantaneous? No feature of doctrine gave Wesley more difficulty than this one. His answer was that it was both gradual and instantaneous: both a process and a crisis. Most of the time he dwells on the gradual work, probably as a carry-over from the tradition in which he grew up and partly to counteract the position of those extremists who said sanctification was complete at regeneration. Toward the end of his ministry he stressed the instantaneous aspect more, as has already been shown. In this he was influenced by the testimonies of many who professed to have entered into this experience by faith and found complete deliverance from evil tempers in an instant. In turn, his teaching influenced the movement, and, especially after 1760, this element came to occupy a prominent place in the typical pattern of Methodist experience.

Positively, it is reasonable to suppose that there comes a time when one's self-hallowing or consecration can be complete. Negatively, it is reasonable to suppose that there comes a definite time when sin censes to "subsist," especially if this cleansing is a gift of grace. In other words, as Wesley expressed it, one may be dying for some time yet there comes a definite time, when death is complete. In the New Testament this is a legitimate inference from what is explicitly stated.

IV

FACTORS, OTHER THAN SCRIPTURAL, WHICH WERE INFLUENTIAL

Tradition. By tradition is meant the church tradition in which Wesley was nurtured, chiefly the Established Church. As has previously been pointed out this influence was both conscious and unconscious and was probably more pervasive than Wesley himself realized. He retained his loyalty to the Church throughout life and ignored the popular demand

among his Societies for separation. His brother Charles was even more of a high churchman than was John.

Wesley never found fault with the Articles, or the Homilies, or the Sacraments; instead he appealed to them frequently, claimed that he believed in them, and acted upon them more faithfully than the average Anglican.

One unfortunate importation from this source was the Realistic Theory of Original Guilt which the Anglicans inherited from Augustine. Wesley accepted the belief that all sinned with Adam and incurred his guilt and punishment—that of spiritual guilt. Said he, "in Adam all died, all human kind, all the children of men who were then in Adam's loins."¹¹ In another sermon he applies to the Christian the language appropriate for the condemned sinner when he says, "A conviction of their *guiltiness* is another branch of that repentance which belongs to the children of God."¹² Elsewhere he distinguished more clearly between the sinner's guilt and the unsanctified believer's pollution, as when he says,

The repentance consequent upon justification, is widely different from that which is antecedent to it. This implies no guilt, no sense of condemnation, no consciousness of the wrath of God.¹³

The language used by Wesley to describe the sin "cleaving to all our words and actions" came from his theological heritage—in this case from the Thirty-nine Articles.

The Prayer-Book also contributed to Wesleyan doctrine. From the "Morning Prayer" in the "Third Collect" Charles sang:

Vouchsafe to keep my soul from sin,
Its cruel power suspend,

¹¹ J. Wesley, "Repentance of Believers," *Sermons*, I, 121.

¹² J. Wesley, "Scripture Way of Salvation," *op. cit.*, I, 389.

¹³ *Loc. cit.*, "Sin in Believers," *op. cit.*, I, 110, et al.

Till all this strife and war within
In perfect peace shall end.

Though now to every sin inclined,
I would be as thou art,
Lowly as Thine, oh, make my mind,
And meek and pure my heart.¹⁴

The section on Confirmation suggested these lines:

Purge me from every sinful blot,
My idols all be cast aside;
Cleave me from every sinful thought,
From all the filth of self and pride.¹⁵

The language came from the Church; the faith that the prayers would be answered came from another source—the Bible.

Environment. By environment is meant the immediate and contemporary influences as distinguished from past environment which has just been labeled tradition.

From a theological standpoint Wesley was less influenced by his contemporaries than by his predecessors. Evidence of this is his condemnation of contemporary habits of thought:

It is now quite unfashionable . . . to say anything to the disparagement of human nature; which is generally allowed, notwithstanding a few infirmities, to be very innocent, and wise, and virtuous!¹⁶

His was not blindly reactionary or indiscriminate; he could speak of "the deists, Arians, and Socinians," as the "first-born of Satan,"¹⁷ but he welcomed the reflections of Locke and Newton, and referred to Bengel as "the most pious, the most judicious, and the most laborious, of all the modern commentators on the New Testament."¹⁸ He was scornful of the "merciful John Calvin" for burning Servetus with green wood for avoiding the

¹⁴ Quoted in G. Warrington, *Echoes of the Prayer-Book in Wesley's Hymns*, p. 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹⁶ J. Wesley, "Original Sin," *Sermons*, I, 392.

¹⁷ J. Wesley, "True Christianity Defended," *op. cit.*, II, 493.

¹⁸ J. Wesley, "On the Trinity," *op. cit.*, II, 21.

term "Trinity" because it was not in the Bible.¹⁹

In general, Wesley was conservative but not blindly so; he did not accept the new uncritically because it was new, nor venerate the old simply for its age. Every current movement he tested by the Bible and its bearing on the Revival.

Reason. To the assertion that Wesley's doctrine is logical but not scriptural there seems to be adequate room for the rejoinder that it is in the Bible and he freely used his reason to explain and apply it; there is much more evidence than can be cited in support of his claim than can be urged against it.

The implication that his doctrine of perfection grew out of the deistic ideas of his age²⁰ seems entirely unwarranted; his belief in the corruption and helplessness of human nature was in direct opposition to deism.

Experience. On one hand, Wesley asserted that if the Bible taught perfection and no one exemplified it he would still insist upon it—"let God be true and every man a liar"; on the other hand, he indicated the importance of Christian experience to verify and interpret scripture, stating that if no one ever experienced what he preached he would conclude that it was not scriptural.²¹ Thus, the four factors contributed to his doctrine: the Bible, his own reason, his Christian experience, and the experience of others. All were important.

Summary. The question as to whether Wesley was scriptural may not be answered without qualifications. By "scriptural" it is here taken to mean, in general, accuracy in grasping the thought and intent of the several books of the Bible in their present form.

His use of the Bible is fragmentary.

He notes the context too infrequently, and instead, strings together passages from different parts of the Bible which have a "spiritual" association but no literary or historical connection.

The texts on which he builds are sometimes overworked, as, for instance, the use of Ps. 130:8, "and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities," as a promise of entire sanctification.²² Likewise, such texts as Eze. 36:25, 29; I Jn. 3:8 and Rom. 8:3, 4 are used as proofs when it is legitimate to employ them only by accommodation, or as illustrative, or by inference, and not for direct "proof."

There are other passages and emphases in the Bible which he failed to use as effectively as he might. For example, *I Thessalonians*, especially verses 4:13 and 5:23, could have been used more. He might well have devoted more time to Biblical exposition in his *Plain Account* even if it meant less space for argumentation.

On the positive side it may be affirmed that Wesley was "scriptural" when the following factors are considered.

He exhibits an intimate knowledge of the original languages, even though it is not conspicuous in his sermons and popular tracts.²³ To those who accused him of superficial scholarship he admitted that he studied on the road, but, he added that the Scriptures were an exception—that he had examined "minutely" every word in the Greek New Testament, and that "it was not in running that I wrote twice over the *Notes on the New Testament*."²⁴ Facility as a linguist does not guarantee trustworthy interpretations but it does entitle one to respect when he speaks.

During fifty years of controversy,

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

²⁰ F. J. McConnell, *Essentials of Methodism*, p. 17.

²¹ J. Wesley, *Plain Account*, (Tigert), p. 75.

²² J. Wesley, *Plain Account*, (Tigert), p. 44.

²³ E. g., J. Wesley, "Original Sin," *Sermons*, I, 393, where he exhibits accurate knowledge of the Hebrew original of "imaginations." Cf. "The Fall of Man," *op. cit.*, II, 36.

²⁴ J. Wesley, quoted by Cell, *op. cit.*, p. x.

when theological passions were high no one undertook to refute Wesley from a Scriptural standpoint, in any worthwhile effort. His requests that he be corrected from the Bible, and his challenge to prove him unscriptural, were never acted upon.

There are no instances where, in any major points, Wesley's interpretation was plainly contrary to the meaning of the original. In many cases he took inferences for assertions but in few cases is he clearly in error. In no case can it be shown that he deliberately perverted the Bible to support a previously adopted position.

V

THE VALIDITY OF THE IDEAL

In recent years the challenge to this ideal of Christian perfection comes with renewed vigor from the same source and with nearly the same arguments that were heard in Wesley's day. The "Theology of crisis" follows in the Reformed tradition and is characteristically suspicious of "pretensions" to perfection. So great is the Barthian polemic against sanctification that a Lutheran protests.²⁵

This trend began with Luther: "The saints are always intrinsically sinners; that is why they are declared righteous."²⁶ Similarly Brunner says, that the sinner, "though justified, continues to the last days of his earthly life to be a sinner,"²⁷—language that little suggests the eighth chapter of Romans.

Niebuhr's polemic against perfectionism, like Barth's, abounds in "paradoxes." The dialectic is impressive, perhaps because incomprehensible. It acknowledges that the complexity does seem to offend "canons of consistency." Essentially, like apocalyptic perfectionists, it defers the hope of perfection and deliverance from sin until the next life.

To understand that the Christ in us is not a possession but a hope; that perfection is not a reality but an intention; that such peace as we know in this life is never purely the peace of achievement . . . does not destroy moral ardour or responsibility.²⁸

If the Pelagians, Arminians, and pietists, are never free from the temptation to Pharisaism, the Reformation thought is never free from the temptation to antinomianism. This tendency has never been fully mastered either in logic or in life. Niebuhr's judgment that "man could not be tempted if he had never sinned" violates what Christians have always believed about Jesus and it ignores the origin of sin. In reality it destroys freedom, for if a man had never, at some time in his experience, had the power of contrary choice he never was free. The old doctrine of Original Sin is preferable to such an alternative since it has the advantage of supposing that, at least once, man was presented with a choice when he had real freedom. If sin must precede temptation, then man was always predisposed to sin and never had a fair chance. Niebuhr joins James' definition of temptation to Paul's concept of sin and yet ignores the exhortation of both to cleansing of the heart. However, he does credit Wesley with being more Biblical in his idea of perfection than other "sectarian perfectionists."²⁹

In spite of the resentment which a profession of sanctification always inspires, and notwithstanding the inaptitude of the term "Christian perfection," Wesley's plea for tolerance breathes a sincere "catholic spirit" and is entitled to respect.

Are we your enemies, because we look for a full deliverance from that carnal mind, which is enmity against God? Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-labourers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Although this we confess, . . . we do expect to love God with all our hearts,

²⁵ A. Koeberle, *The Quest for Holiness*.

²⁶ Luther, *Works*, (Ficker, ed.) II, 105, cited by Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*,

²⁷ E. Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis*, p. 63.

²⁸ Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, II, 125.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 173.

"by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love Him and worthily magnify His holy name."³⁰

Unlike theories of "imperfection," it refuses to believe that the final answer to sin is not faith without actual salvation but faith resulting in salvation. It is no accident that the practical effect of this tradition is "faith" with little of the fruits of faith. Compensation is suspected in the substitution of the "fact of Christ's presence" for the "consciousness of Christ's presence."³¹

Opposition to perfection, such as those indicated, arises essentially from doctrinaire prejudices rather than from practical, scriptural, or logical grounds. Much of it is to be explained from defective ideas of God, of sin, and of grace. If sin is located in the will rather than in the body or mind; if victory over sinfulness is to be sought in God rather than in self-effort; and if the idea of redemption is primarily the rendering of the human spirit habitable by the Divine, then slight objection should be raised against the age-old conviction that this life is properly the theater of victory over sin and the attainment of full moral stature. If the Christian message cannot give assurance here, it should expend less effort in explaining why.

The foregoing discussion has not been inspired primarily by a desire to defend Wesley or his doctrine, but rather to clear away the relevant from the irrelevant in the discussion and to permit Wesley to defend himself against his critics. In many of the cases just mentioned, Wesley's self-criticisms have been overlooked and his qualifications and explanations ignored. It appears therefore, that while there is much in Wesley's personal life and views with which to find fault, yet his doctrine of perfection stands on

solid ground. Much modern objection to the doctrine comes from a lack of understanding of what Wesley said, from the faults of its living witnesses, and from a lack of sympathy with the whole purpose behind it. Current neglect of this doctrine results from a neglect of regeneration. Much opposition comes from lack of a satisfactory nomenclature. There is no term or phrase, Biblical or otherwise, that expresses the whole doctrine, without partiality or ambiguity. Wesley's own central emphasis on love to God and man has never been improved upon. Even "perfect love" is but a partial expression of its content since it ignores the category of holiness.

In spite of inevitable cheapening and crystallization of the inner experience of the soul it is difficult to see how the ideal of holiness could be presented to the masses and captured by them without some mechanical standardization. The basic danger in the Wesleyan pattern is not a fundamental error within itself but is that danger inherent in any pattern—that of substituting the letter for the spirit. Wesley broke through the shell of eighteenth century dogmatism and found the "living water" as Paul, Augustine, and Luther had, and many followed him. Inevitably the forms which the new spirit assumed again became stereotyped and dogmatic. The present generation needs a prophet of similar caliber to teach the old lesson that constantly needs re-interpretation in the light of contemporary issues. Like previous generations too, this one needs not only light but a new incarnation of the ideal of pure love to God and man. It is well if a generation has only one such incarnation; it is much better if it has a multitude of them.

One partial but not insignificant aspect of the validity of a movement is expressed in the idea that the spirit tends to take itself a body. The idea of perfection as popularized and defined by Wesley has an impressive

³⁰ J. Wesley, *Plain Account*, 28.

³¹ *The Victorious Life*, (1918), p. 354.

"body." The vitality of this ideal is illustrated by the formation in America of the National Holiness Association, which is still active on an international scale. The number of "holiness denominations" thoroughly Wesleyan in doctrine and emphasis is another evidence of the value of this ideal. Their combined membership, including that of missionary societies, numbers perhaps a million. In addition, the origin of such bodies as the Evangelical Church was directly caused by this feature of Methodist doctrine; as in the mother church, after a period of controversy, the doctrine was officially adopted and thereafter neglected.³² In addition, the influence of this emphasis outside of the Wesleyan tradition is reflected in "Victorious Life" movements which express a similar impetus in different phraseology. Practically all of the modern "holiness movements" can be traced to Wesley.³³ The same desire, on the part of the common people, for the ultimate in Christian piety may be seen in the rapid growth of Pentecostal groups, especially in America. It is only reasonable to suppose that this doctrine, promising and promoting the ultimate in the life of the believer, answers to some sense of need among Protestant Christians.

The wholesome emphasis for the present seems to lie in emphasizing the aspect of growth rather than status, and keeping uppermost the positive aspect of love.

The Wesleyan doctrine of the ideal did not start off a new school of thought but rather a new life movement. While it did not provide a creed, it did furnish a discipline; in so doing it recaptured the Biblical emphasis on religion as a way of life—as "salvation by faith."

³² R. K. Schwab, *The History of the Doctrine of Christian Perfection in the Evangelical Association*, pp. 200ff.

³³ B. B. Warfield, *Perfectionism*, II, 463.

VI

GENERAL SUMMARY

Two basic ideas were noted in the Old Testament as they apply to the ideal for man: holiness, associated with the priestly tradition, and righteousness, associated with the prophetic tradition. Gradually these two concepts, the religious and the moral, merged—to the enrichment of both.

Holiness, a quality peculiar to the divine, included, from the first, separation from the common and the "unclean" and dedication to Jahweh. The inclusion of righteousness, goodness, and mercy, in this concept, found its most explicit expression in Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. To the extent that these qualities were predicated of Jahweh they were thought to be demanded of all men and exemplified in some—Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and Job—to mention a few. A man thus whole-hearted in his devotion, justice, and integrity, was described as "perfect," meaning not freedom from all fault, but blameless, sound in character, as sacrificial victims were sound in body.

In later Judaism, devotion to the Torah, and a greater concern with intention, with the universality of sin, and with the importance of motive, is reflected in the popular literature of the post-canonical period. Rabbinic commentaries indicate an emphasis upon qualities of mercy and charity as essential in those regarded as "perfectly righteous." Theoretically, all could keep the law perfectly; actually, no one did. In both popular and rabbinic writings, final and full deliverance from sin and the "evil imagination" could be expected only in the Messianic age.

Early Greek thought associated perfection with physical prowess, the classical period made perfection to consist in knowledge, and in the Hellenistic period the body was regarded as the prison of the soul. These influences decisively affected Christian-

ity, after the first century, to the extent that, after the second century the "perfect" Christian was often regarded as a gnostic or an ascetic "athlete." Stoicism probably contributed to the ideal of martyrdom as the perfect end of a Christian life.

The New Testament, in general, represents the ethical ideals of the Old Testament. Here, for the first time, is to be found the complete fusion of the ideals of holiness and righteousness, in love. Perfection consists in love as the fulfilling of, not the substitute for, the law. This is seen in the Synoptic teaching, in Paul's letters, and in the Johannine literature. The priestly nomenclature of holiness is used but only in a completely moralized and ethical sense. It contributes to the idea of ethical perfection the concepts of separation, consecration, sacrifice—the religious side of morality. Sanctification includes the negative aspect of cleansing from sin and the positive side of consecration to God and the service of humanity and involves the total personality, body, mind, and the self. Certain passages, particularly in Paul and John, imply that this sanctification may and should be complete and entire.

The New Testament breathes an air of optimism, not noticeable in other literature, that man's greatest enemies, sin and death, are, or will be conquered through Christ, and that deliverance from sin is not to be deferred to some future day or era but that "today is the day of salvation." This deliverance is not through observance of a rite or adherence to the law but is by faith, issuing in loyalty and love. Perfection is thus, not absolute but relative; it consists essentially in love and likeness to God and in love and service to man.

This Christian ideal only partly conquered the Roman world for it was itself partly conquered by a perversion, due mostly to "gnostic" influences, into various forms of renunciation—chil-

iasm, martyrdom, monasticism. The monastic ideal was influential in the Christian ideal of the perfect Christian until after Wesley's day. Its gradually relaxing hold is seen successively in the "Bretheren of the Common Life," in the "protestant monasticism" of Spener and the pietists, and the evangelical perfection of the eighteenth century. The Evangelical Revival brought into emphasis what is most characteristic in the New Testament ideal of perfection: separation from the "world" only in a moral sense, "other-worldliness," emphasis upon salvation from sin, a message for the masses, a new individualism, a missionary program, and social service.

Wesley, by presenting Christianity as essentially a religion of salvation from sin, hit upon what is most prominent in the New Testament and prominent in the Old. By stressing faith as the method of salvation he was in line with much of the Synoptics and John but especially of Paul. For this reason Wesley's contention must be conceded, that, if he was a heretic, he became so by reading the Bible. Today, in liberal Protestantism, the Greek conception of human nature prevails over the Hebrew; the Greek view of sin as ignorance prevails over the Hebrew idea of sin as rebellion; and man's destiny is not the New Jerusalem but the New Republic. The Pauline view of salvation from sin by faith is now being replaced by the Solonic ideal of salvation from injustice by legislation. For these reasons the Wesleyan message is today often regarded as an anachronism, and Wesley is either disregarded or re-interpreted by those in that tradition.

At the same time there has come a new appreciation of Wesley from all branches of Christendom. Prejudices have given way before a realization of his effect upon his own century and those following. Many things which he pioneered are almost axiomatic in evangelical denominations. These in-

clude tract evangelism, pastoral calling, lay leadership, open-air services, and such doctrinal emphases as "universal atonement," the love of God, the immanence of God, the validity of religious experience, and the emphasis on religion as purity of life as well as purity of faith.

There is a widespread conviction that Luther and the other reformers did not go far enough—that they emphasized justification by faith without saying much about sanctification and renewal of the inner man. This Wesley did, stressing that sanctification also is attainable by faith and that it may be entire in this life. Thus, he joined the Catholic idea of infused righteousness, as the goal, with the Protestant idea of faith, as the means, to obtain the idea of entire sanctification by faith. This he defined as pure love to God and man filling the soul to the exclusion of all sinful or selfish inclinations.

Wesley was in the middle of the road in most issues. Against the humanists in his own church he urged the depravity of man; against the Calvinists he urged the salvability of man. He stressed the limitations of reason to the rationalists, and its importance to the fanatics. He denied that entire sanctification comes at regeneration to the Moravians, and insisted that it may come before death to the Calvinists. To the antinomians he preached good works, to the sacerdotalists faith, and, to all others, both.

Wesley's retention of the Ninth Article and the traditional concept of Original Sin is often regarded as damaging to his doctrine of perfection, but in recent years there has come a new realization of social solidarity and the importance of heredity. The result has been in the direction of rehabilitation of the ancient doctrine. Wesley erred in retaining the Augustinian concept of Original Guilt and was never free from sacramentarianism, but, in the main, his view of human nature, its

freedom and possibilities, and his view of grace were such as to make his doctrine of perfection valid today.

Recent studies of religious experience tend to validate its claim to trustworthiness as a source of religious knowledge. By using this as a check and a criteria of dogma Wesley anticipated many modern trends in inductive method. To the interpretation of Scripture by reason he added—"and experience," thus the authority of the Bible was liberalized and strengthened by the authority of the Spirit in Christian experience. The "Christ for us" of Protestant scholasticism became the "Christ in us" of the Revival. The emphasis shifted from doctrine to discipline; from belief to performance; from a future to a present salvation.

The relationship of mysticism and holiness to social service needs further exploration. There is a natural unity here which has hitherto remained unexplored. Wesley's beginning in this area needs to be carried forward.

CONCLUSIONS

1. In both Old and New Testaments there is a conviction that man can, and should be, well-pleasing to God.

2. This "perfection" is not absolute but relative.

3. Many passages in the New Testament imply that this "perfection" or "holiness" includes deliverance from all sin that is due to selfish direction of the will, i. e., exclusive of "infirmities" incident to body and mind.

4. Such a salvation from sin is regarded as a promised privilege in this life, and, in Paul especially, as coming by faith.

6. There is a valid distinction between restoration to God's favor (justification) and transformation to his likeness (sanctification).

7. The focal points in the Wesleyan emphasis are, that sanctification is entire, and, that it comes by faith; on these essential points the Scriptural

"proof" is the most explicit and emphatic.

8. In his definition of perfection as love excluding sin and selfishness, inaugurated by faith, Wesley was Pauline.

9. The emphasis upon faith led to a stress, in Wesley's later ministry, upon entire sanctification as a second work of grace distinct from regeneration.

10. Despite changed attitudes toward the Bible, sin, and human nature, the main elements in this doctrine remain valid.

11. The Bible should be interpreted by Christian experience.

12. The ideals of holiness and service have a natural affinity.

Upon the basis of the data considered, the conclusion is that the main elements of Wesley's definition of the Christian ideal are in accord with the

major emphases in the New Testament. Wesley's claim to being "scriptural" can therefore be validated.

It is not without significance that the Wesleyan phase of the pietistic movement has fostered a renewed interest in the Scriptures and has tended to check the influence of "destructive criticism," in evangelical churches. It affords additional confirmation to Wesley's claim that the Revival represented a return to primitive Christianity, and to his assertion that his "most distinctive doctrine" is only what he found in the Bible.

This generation needs another prophet of Wesley's caliber to carry forward the work of the Reformation by pointing the way to the fuller realization of this ideal—perfect love to both God and man, and its practical application to all the relationships of our complex civilization.

Early Methodist Autobiography

A Study in the Literature of The Inner Life*

MARY ALICE TENNEY

Although much has been written concerning the remote influence of Methodism upon eighteenth-century literature, no investigation has been centered around a literary *genre* produced under Wesley's immediate influence and expressive, therefore, of the ideas which Wesleyan brought into currency. This is a study of early Methodist autobiography for such evidences.

Methodist autobiography continues a literary convention established in the seventeenth century by the radical Protestant sects, whose interest in inward religion led to their adoption of autobiographical writing as an instrument of introspection and evangelism. By 1650 the ministerial autobiography had become a popular means of self-revelation among all the enthusiastic sects. From them came two masterpieces: Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and Fox's *Journal*. But among the conservatives the form met with disfavor. Anglican autobiography was entirely objective, and the master autobiography from Presbyterianism, Baxter's *Reliquiae*, gave scant attention to subjective history.

The extreme interpretation given by the enthusiasts to the doctrine of immanence and the freedom allowed for response to the Inner Light was congenial to the romantic temperament.

As a result, their autobiography offers in varying degrees, depending upon the thoroughness of their interpretation of the Protestant theory of private judgment and the extent of their exercise of group control, such qualities as free play of individualism, disregard for the social distinctions traditionally established, faith in the self expressed creatively in a fresh exercise of imaginative vision or wasted in neurotic subjectivism.

But enthusiasm, and with it enthusiastic autobiography, declined at the end of the century, when Latitudinarian developments offered a challenge to the emphasis upon inward religion. The rise of rationalism, while attributable to diverse causes, was to some degree the result of the revolt against the subjectivism of the enthusiasts, and the dogma of reason, identifying, as it did, rationality with uniformity, became a powerful weapon against the eccentricities of individualists. The doctrine of immanence disappeared before an extreme emphasis upon transcendence, and Christian belief sought foundation entirely in external evidence. Revelation was conceived of as simply a restatement of truths already known to natural religion.

In literature the consequences of a philosophy of uniformitarianism are seen in a disavowal of the Platonic doctrine of poetical inspiration, an appeal to traditional authority, an anti-rationalistic distrust of self, an inhibition of individual impulse, and a well-calculated defense of the status quo.

*The title of a doctoral dissertation presented to the Department of English Literature in the University of Wisconsin in 1939. What follows is the abstract and chapter six of this thesis.

The system of natural religion, however, was doomed when its defenders, following the lead of Locke, employed the empirical form of apologetic. The dogmatic assumptions concerning the universality of reason were challenged, and the logical outcome of rationalism proved to be the skepticism of Hume. Wesleyanism at this juncture offered a new foundation for religious belief.

In conclusion it may be noted that Wesleyan doctrine was a synthesis composed of diverse elements which were a part of the eighteenth-century complex of ideas. It adapted to its own ends both the theory of uniformitarianism and Lockian empiricism; but its roots were planted in Anglo-Catholic mysticism and orthodox tradition, and its evolution was influenced by the pietistic ideal of a select body of the converted. Impelled by a profound concern over inward religion, Wesley moved gradually from the rationalistic conception of faith as intellectual assent to dogma, to a definition of faith as assurance. In this appeal to the inner consciousness he believed that he had not only revived the Protestant theory of justification by faith, but had also discovered an answer to skepticism. He presented as a final attestation to the truth of Christianity the internal evidence given by personal religious experience. While he did not reject traditional evidence, or institutional pattern, or the exercise of the reason, his major appeal was to the "spiritual senses."

The history of early Methodism is the history of the clarification and expansion of this theory of the "spiritual senses." In this process of doctrine-making religious autobiography played a very important part. Originally Wesley under High Church influences used the diary as an instrument of self-examination. Governed always by an emphasis upon the theory of original sin, he approached self-study more analytically and critically than the en-

thusiastic autobiographers. Yet he valued more highly than they the subjective material. The major objective in autobiographical writing among them had been evangelism; the new motive introduced by Wesley was inductive inquiry into religious experience. An examination of the autobiography and biography produced by various religious groups formed one stage in the process by which Wesley arrived at his definition of faith; a further examination of autobiographical letters solicited from his followers furnished data in formulating his theory of Christian perfection; the autobiographies of the lay preachers were published in the *Arminian Magazine* as empirical evidence against Calvinistic doctrine. The Methodist movement may therefore be said to have been founded upon an empirical approach to religious experience, in which autobiography was used for case study.

The most noteworthy consequence of this adaptation of the empirical method was the transition made by Wesleyan thought from the universality of reason to the universality of the "spiritual senses." Wesley thereby took over the chief argument supporting the claims of reason and used it to present the claims of intuition. The references made by Blake, Coleridge, and Wordsworth to Methodist doctrine indicate that it was Wesley's effective interpretation of faith that most impressed the early romantics. The success of the Wesleyan appeal to the subjective evidence furnished a basis of fact and certainty for other theories which were denying the supremacy of reason. The strength of Wesleyanism lay in its foundation in orthodox tradition and, likewise, in the balance it effected between individualism and institutionalism.

But from his examination of the literature of the inner life produced within these bounds Wesley announced certain discoveries which anticipated and

subtly influenced future literary developments. First came the declaration of the universality of the "spiritual senses"; this led logically to a recognition of the spiritual potentialities of the humblest of men when moved by a desire for moral perfection. Moreover, he discovered in the autobiographies of these men "strong sterling sense" and "noble sentiments" expressed "in the purest finest language." He was amazed at the artless beauty of their simple style and recommended it as a pattern, challenging the "most polite" to alter it for the better, and contrasting it with the cant phrases and conventional diction of the day. Early Methodist autobiography thus became the medium for a significant experiment, supplying proof of the trustworthiness of intuition, the safety of democratic privilege, the nobility of the common man, and the beauties of the plain style.

THE LITERARY SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY METHODIST AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The object of this study has been the examination of religious autobiography written by early Methodists for evidences of the place of Wesleyanism in the literary currents of the eighteenth century. The assumption which has guided this examination has been that the religious autobiography is a literary type which might illustrate the relationship of Wesleyanism to certain pre-romantic tendencies of the age.

What qualities had the ascendancy in literature in 1739 when Wesley began his mission as field preacher to England's forgotten masses? Without adding anything more to the already voluminous discussion of the questions, "What is neo-classicism?" and "What is pre-romanticism?" it may be safely asserted that during the first half of the eighteenth century certain qualities dominant in the literature of

the time may be designated as neo-classicism, while certain other qualities, fugitive and ill-defined, may be regarded, on the one hand, as reappearances of tendencies in the seventeenth century, or may, on the other hand, be considered anticipations of the characteristics of a succeeding era which is explicitly known as romantic.

The neo-classical qualities which are relevant to this discussion are few but very definite, and appear to be derivatives of the prevailing rationalism rather more than products of the devotion to the classics. They are, nevertheless, customarily spoken of as expressions of eighteenth-century classicism. The first to be noted is the disavowal of the Platonic doctrine of poetical inspiration. This faith in the divine afflatus had been held by most of the English literary critics of the sixteenth century and continued well into the seventeenth century until the fear of enthusiasm laid its chilling hand upon both religion and poetry. The doctrine is of the very essence of romanticism. Fairchild says of it;

The romanticist takes a serious and lofty view of poetry. For him, the true poet is a bard, a prophet, a priest, inspired by some power greater than himself, pouring out floods of wisdom in rapturous song. The poet's imagination, soaring above ordinary reason, gives him insight into the deep spiritual truth of things—gives him power even to create such truth. This conception of poetry . . . was popular in the literary criticism of the Renaissance. During the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, however, it fell upon evil days. Enthusiasm in poetry, like enthusiasm in religion, was under suspicion, and genius was curbed by judgment and the rules. . . . Versified rhetoric supplanted 'truth carried alive into the heart by passion.'¹

The parallelism between the distaste for religious enthusiasm and the distaste for poetic enthusiasm is the sub-

¹ Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *Religious Trends in English Poetry*, Volume I: 1700-1740, *Protestantism and the Cult of Sentiment* (New York, 1939), p. 205.

ject for study by Sister M. Kevin, S.S.J., in her dissertation on *Enthusiasm in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century*. She concludes:

Religious enthusiasm was outside the pale of the rational; it catered to imagination and hence was dangerous. The enthusiast was non-universal, fanatical, hysterical, and egoistic. He displayed altogether too much feeling to be genuine, and he was entirely too excitable to be trustworthy. . . . In the domain of literature this situation was exactly paralleled. Pseudo-classicism like its philosophical corollary frowned upon imagination, upon feeling, upon non-universality, upon irregularity and upon non-conformity to pattern. To give expression to one's emotions or to one's passions was neither good poetry nor good taste. Imagination and fancy, undisciplined by reason and good sense, were as dangerous in poetic expression as they were in religion.²

The extreme emphasis given by the advocates of natural religion, orthodox and non-orthodox alike, to the doctrine of transcendence unquestionably gave support to this reaction against enthusiasm. Every dominant influence of the early eighteenth century seems to have contributed to the re-enforcement of the concept of transcendence. The subjectivism of the Inner Light sects had brought their interpretation of immanence into general disrepute; Newtonian science had furnished a philosophical basis for a doctrine that seemed antithetical; and the decline in the disciplinary and liturgical influence of the church over the masses offered in a practical way a final refutation to the theory of God within. The belief in a personal God, which is an important aspect of the orthodox Christian tradition, was so neglected that it has become almost platitudinous to describe early eighteenth-century religion as "belief in an absentee God" or worship of "the mechanic of the Universe."

The effect of this over-stressed concept upon the divine poetry of the time

has been too frequently discussed to call for repetition, and the repercussions in secular poetry are also well-known. The universal popularity of Pope's *Essay on Man* with all religious groups in spite of its presentation of a God constructed according to Deistic specifications is sufficient evidence of the general satisfaction with a theory which could neither inspire inward religion nor kindle the creative imagination of the poet. Fairchild in a recent, well-documented study of religious trends in English poetry between 1700 and 1740 adds much further evidence to support the well-known hypothesis that sentimentalism found its beginnings in a "common-sense Protestantism verging upon Latitudinarianism" and declares that the traditional faith was "losing its hold on the imagination of a large majority" of the poets. "Yet," he says, "with few exceptions they are not natural unbelievers; they are mostly the sort of men whose feelings urge them to believe in *something*. When Christianity and poetic imagination have parted company, what beliefs will nourish the poet's art?"³ He finds the answer to this question in "the quasi-religious emotional satisfaction" which came through the cultivation of sentimental naturalism. In other words, with the disappearance of the orthodox concept of the immanence of God there came the doctrine of the natural goodness of man.

An element which has always been considered the mainspring of neo-classicism is the appeal of authority: in literature the appeal to the classics and traditional practice; in religion the appeal to institutions and traditional beliefs. Viewed in relation to its setting in the Protestant religious upheaval, this element may be interpreted as a demand for some limitation on self-assertion. The left-wing movements of Protestantism had been built upon a transcendent faith in the

² Sister M. Kevin Whelan, S. S. J., *Enthusiasm in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century* (1700-1774) (Washington, D. C., 1935), p. 51.

³ Fairchild, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

capacity of the individual for immediate apprehension of truth; the extreme right wing now viewed this faith as not only extravagant, but as completely false. With God no longer conceived of as immanent the internal mandate had no authority; all authority must come from without. Truth could be found only in the accretion of wisdom through the ages. For a poem the choicest subject was "what oft was thought"; for a sermon the safest subject was an ethical principle which could be proved common to all religions, Christian and pagan. To the neo-classical critic original genius was a term with dangerous connotations; to the rationalistic theologian the term "revealed religion" had, likewise, dubious associations. The best guide for the critic was the body of rules handed down from the ancients; the best criterion for the theologian was a creed so minimized as to satisfy the natural reason for all time. Authority was to be found in rules compendiously stored up in books and institutions, and not in individuals.

This flight to the safety of institutions and age-tested rules and creeds bespeaks a deep-seated distrust of the self. One of the strangest paradoxes of this very paradoxical period is an anti-rationalism which seems to run directly counter to the exaltation of the reason. Many of the great champions of rationalism find themselves eventually admitting the imperfections of reason; indeed, the original exponents of the principles of natural religion—Locke, for instance—undertook their defense because of their deep distrust of individual reason and their profound sense of human limitations. It was a very uncertain and narrow world left for the individual after he had been told that he could trust only reason, and then warned that few men act as rational beings. He found himself often, as a result, having to choose between a morbid cynicism and a shallow ethics of glor-

ified self-interest. He was also forced by a universal distaste for spontaneous self-expression to accept a social code in which inhibition and indirection kept the emotions repressed or disguised. In spite of the fact that the theory of self-interest was so popular that the leading divines offered ingenious defenses for it, avoidance of reference to the self was carefully cultivated in conversation and literature. The personal pronoun dropped out of poetry and objectivity became the rule. Inevitably so, for the appeal to external authority discouraged reliance upon the self; the conception of reason as universal made the shades of individual opinion seem eccentric; the distrust of emotion rendered suspect even legitimate impulses; and, above all, the fear of enthusiastic subjectivism held a strict rein upon everything that suggested interest in the world within. The talk of Wordsworth about the "inner eye which is the bliss of solitude" would have been as objectionable as the talk of a Quaker about his "openings."

Since the most fanatical demonstrations of subjectivism in the seventeenth century had occurred where experiments had been made in religious democracy, the eighteenth century saw a zealous support of the status quo; even the humanitarian movements of the day were governed by a demand for the preservation of the caste system. Not everyone was as frank in stating the reason for concern over the results of the Methodist revival as was the Duchess of Buckingham, when in a letter to Lady Huntingdon she said of Methodist doctrines, they "are most repulsive, strongly tinged with Impertinence and Disrespect toward their Superiors, in perpetually endeavouring to level all Ranks, and to do away with Distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the Common Wretches that crawl on

the Earth."⁴ But undoubtedly the question of what social readjustments might have to be made when a Bristol miner became aware of his true relation to both his God and his neighbor troubled more than one observer of the revival. And viewed now from the perspective of two centuries the greatest result of the Methodist movement was probably the answer which it finally gave to that question. Recent studies have shown how subtly but steadily the democratic organization of the local religious societies made of nineteenth century Methodism a great levelling force.⁵

The correlation between neo-classicism and anti-enthusiasm presented in the foregoing survey makes unnecessary a lengthy examination of the romantic elements in the autobiography of the enthusiasts. This is not to say that all enthusiastic biography is romantic. Rather, let us say that certain elements inherent in enthusiasm freed the romantic spirit. The extreme emphasis upon the doctrine of immanence, and the encouragement given the worshipper to follow the mandates of the inner authority, created an atmosphere in which the romantic temperament could express itself. As a result the autobiography produced by the early Independents and Baptists, the Seekers, the Ranters, and the Quakers offers in varying degrees, depending upon the thoroughness of their response to the Protestant theory of individualism and the extent of their exercise of group control, such qualities as the free expression of individual impulse, utter disregard for the social distinctions established by a traditional conception of a static universe, and faith in the self expressed either in excessive egoism, neurotic subjectivism, hys-

terical emotionalism, or in lofty aspiration, "fresh exercise of the imaginative vision," and quickened moral idealism. The delight of the autobiographer in an inner world of the spirit which he felt should be explored and reported upon was regarded by the common-sense man of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as madness or, at best, eccentricity; yet in some of the greatest poetry of the nineteenth century is to be seen a similar delight in the discovery of a poetic world within.

In view of the attitude in the eighteenth century toward subjective autobiography it is important to know what Wesley's original conception of the function of autobiography was. Did he, when he began the practice of keeping a diary at Oxford, think of self-study, as did the Quakers for instance? The answer is plainly, No. He tells us that it was under the influence of Jeremy Taylor that he first undertook diary writing, his objective being ascetic self-discipline and self-examination. He was not looking within for guidance; he was looking within for carnal impulses. The emphasis is, in no sense, upon the inner light, but, instead, upon original sin. His practice is in keeping with High Church doctrine, rather than with the latent sentimental transcendentalism of Quakerism. No one who has formed an idea of Wesleyanism from a study of Wesley's journal, his sermons, and his forceful exposition of the doctrine of original sin, could confuse his purposes in self-study with those which were primary with the Friends, of whom Miss Wright says:

The greater share of the Friends reasoned that if God were indwelling, then man could not be hopelessly depraved and fallen. In this respect they anticipated certain aspects of the theory of man's essential goodness which Law and Rousseau embodied in their philosophies in the century following.⁶

⁴ C. E. Vulliamy, *John Wesley* (New York, 1932), p. 168.

⁵ See Wearmouth, *op. cit.*; Wesley Bready, *England Before and After Wesley* (London, 1938).

⁶ Wright, *The Literary Life of the Early Friends*, p. 19.

From the beginning Wesley approached self-study analytically and critically, not with the exuberance and confident egoism of the seventeenth century enthusiast. His is an eighteenth-century mind, logical, practical, unmythical, even when most urgent in inquiry concerning what he calls "the life of God in the soul of man." Self-study conceived of as self-examination was always Wesley's guiding autobiographical motive. Even in his middle life it governed greatly the development of autobiographical writing among his followers when he was attempting to formulate his theory of Christian perfection. They were directed to investigate their states of mind for the last and least remains of sin. The natural self was not to be trusted; only by the grace of God could it become trustworthy. His was no sentimental faith in human goodness; yet no religious leader has ever expressed greater faith in the potentialities for goodness in every man who renounces his own pretences to natural goodness and relies upon supernatural aid. The distinction is very important, for it sets Wesley quite apart from the sentimental preachers of "perfection" who were becoming influential during Wesley's last years.

The original and dominant conception of the function of Methodist autobiography is, therefore, neither that of the Quaker, nor that of the sentimentalist or romantic. It looks backward to the attitude toward the self taken by the High Churchman of the seventeenth century, and more important, it may be said to look forward to the psychological study of the self in the twentieth century. With Wesley sinful states of mind are analysed as obstacles to satisfactory relationships with God and man; with the modern psychoanalyst abnormal states of mind are investigated as impediments to complete social adjustment. The difference between the confessions of Rousseau and the self-revealing *Jour-*

nal of the Sophy Hopkey episode is of the same sort as the difference between the neurotic type of self-revelation made by Theodore Dreiser in his *Book of Myself* and the salutary self-analysis made under the direction of a competent psychiatrist.

If Wesley approached the subjective autobiography analytically, did he also regard it with suspicion, as had Baxter? That can hardly be, for he submitted his first published *Journal* for circulation at a time when he was under the fire of criticism, confidently relying upon the power of the subjective evidence to clear him from blame. The religious confession was to him a mirror of the inner life and should be respected. He may be said, indeed, to have valued the confession even more highly than did the most enthusiastic of the enthusiasts, for he saw more fully its intrinsic worth. In *Grace Abounding* and in the *Fox Journal* self-history was used largely as a means toward evangelism and propaganda; in Wesley's *Journal I* self-history was conceived of as a good in and of itself, for the reason that the life within is significant, and an analysis of it may reveal unrecognized truth. Bunyan directs our attention toward the process of salvation: he simply furnishes deductively an illustration of a theory he holds. Wesley focuses the attention upon the honesty and earnestness of the soul in search for God, and says, This is my inner life; let it speak in my defense. *Journal I* represents complete confidence in the results to be obtained by inductive inquiry into subjective material.

Various causes undoubtedly contributed to this confidence. The autobiographical element in English literature steadily increased throughout the eighteenth century; the widespread popularity of collected letters, diaries, journals and confessions of the secular sort testifies to the avid interest taken in the disclosure of per-

sonality. It was the great age of gossip, and in spite of the distaste for intimate self-revelation, curiosity was bound to extend to a man's impulses and motives. The immediate cause, however, for Wesley's own interest was his belief that the search made by the earnest seeker for religious certainty bears a direct relationship to truth. Such a man becomes one in a long line of seekers, and finds something of significance to say to the world of the inner life.

Wesley's faith in the evidence afforded by the record of the inner life steadily increased from the time he issued his first *Journal*. An examination of the autobiography and biography produced by various religious groups formed one stage in the process by which he finally arrived at a revivification of the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith. This examination comprehended the spiritual histories of men, past and present, learned and ignorant. He valued the information wherever he found it.

But it should be noted that his respect for the message of the religious confessant did not arise from his approval of novelty nor individual eccentricity; indeed, it was just the opposite. The message of the confessants, in the last analysis, he found to be universally the same: He who seeks shall find that the just shall live by faith. Wesley's debt to the latitudinarian principle of universalism is evident here. The latitudinarian had taught the universality of reason, whereas Wesley believed he had discovered the universality of faith — faith interpreted as the inner consciousness of God. Every religious autobiographer when he charted the course of his search for God proved, whether he was conscious of it or not, that man has spiritual senses that may become active when aroused by faith, the gift of God. Supplementing the uniformitarian theory that reason is universal, Wesley insisted that spir-

itual capacity is universal.

This version of latitudinarianism reminds us of the Cambridge Platonists in their defense of both reason and religious experience. It will be recalled that Wesley, too, makes such a defense in *The Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*. But the outcome for Wesleyanism was far different from that of the followers of Cambridge Platonism, because Wesley insisted zealously that religious experience be kept within the close borders of orthodox tradition. Fairchild finds various poets in the first half of the eighteenth century who sought to reconcile "a real love for the Christian faith" with "a real love for reason of an intuitive and transcendental kind" under the tutelage of such Platonists as Norris of Bemerton. But with many of them "a sort of Platonism" remained standing long "after the collapse of the Christianity it was originally intended to buttress." The Christianity established by Cambridge Platonism thus

"turned out to be a highly metaphysical affair, not home to the faith of the Scriptures, but essentially independent of that faith. Their Neoplatonic belief in a universal harmony revealed to the harmonious mind could readily detach itself from Christianity and continue to operate as an intellectual expression of sentimentalism."⁷

With this development going on about him, Wesley renounced his early devotion to certain of the Cambridge Platonists⁸ and guarded his interpretation of religious experience from extra-Biblical elements. The result was significant in two respects: Wesley's fear of non-Christian mysticism led to a schematization of religious experience and a consequent narrowing of the experiential range; on the other hand, Wesley's democratization of his message, while it may have sacrificed

⁷ Fairchild, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

⁸ The Cambridge Platonists to whom Wesley was particularly devoted were Smith and Norris.

some of the intellectual elements valued by Cambridge Platonists, extended the opportunities for the appreciation of inward religion.

The shift of emphasis made by Wesley from the universality of reason to the universality of religious intuition is surely very significant for his century; but broad and sweeping generalizations on his influence are dangerous, for many forces were at work calculated to produce a similar change. There was, for instance, the continuing influence of Platonism which has just been discussed. There was, also, the deliquescence of Calvinism, in which various scholars see a fertile field for the growth of sentimental interest in quasi-religious emotion. There is, also, the possibility of the subterranean influence of Inner Light theories. It would seem that the most evident relationship of Wesley to the collapse of rationalism lies in the power and extensiveness of his appeal. The current of religious influence, which should always be deep and powerful in life and literature are to be at their best, was sluggish and shallow. While the stream of Platonism continued its course, while sentimentalism was arising in remote sources, while the mysticism of the small sects became another tributary, Wesley opened many new springs which flooded again the main channel. For Wesleyanism answered to the satisfaction of thousands a question raised by all thinking men, If the truth of Christianity cannot be fully verified by the reason, how then can it be verified? The demonstrable success of Wesley's answer, based as it was upon both the empirical and historical appeal, and upon the results of the Revival, gave a basis of fact and certainty for all other theories which denied the supremacy of reason. As Elton says:

We must think of him, with his appeal to the deeper emotions, as an ally of the new poets and

recoverers of romance, working unawares and far off. A new source of vital feeling, of 'experience,' was to be touched by his ministry and by his organising power. He was the 'dowsers,' the man with the divining twig, who finds new springs that only need the spade. There was water before, but not enough; and no one had dreamed there was so much. And he had to prove, what will always be debated, that the new supply was pure.⁹

It has been noted that Wesley made use of confessional literature in his formulation of the doctrine of assurance at the time of his conversion. This confidence in the history of inner experience continued. In his study of Christian perfection, in fact, he placed even greater confidence in the subjective evidence. The background for Wesley's theory was historical, the Catholic mystics furnishing his original concepts. The new element was his method of verifying and clarifying these concepts. This throws further light, it would seem, upon the part which empiricism played in ushering in the romantic movement. Set in the historical frame of reference, and then investigated by the use of a modern method, this theory of perfection was presented to match other theories more abstract in composition, less traditional in origin. It was a dream which claimed a basis in fact. It illustrates the complex of ideas that characterized the thinkers of Wesley's generation who employed the empirical approach to traditional ideas.

This recapitulation of the facts concerning Wesley's use of autobiography makes evident the degree to which the religious *genre* figured in the evolution of the Methodist movement. At the outset an instrument for self-examination in the form of the diary, it developed into a history of the full range of religious experience, which could be used for formulation of theory, defense of doctrine, or proof

⁹ Elton, *op. cit.*, II, p. 213.

even of the truth of Christianity. Viewed at this distance it becomes a symbol of a great movement which challenged the basic faith of the age, the faith in reason, and offered in its stead a new faith, the faith in man's spiritual sense.

Now when we turn to a review of the mass of religious autobiography produced by early Methodists, we discover first of all a revival of some of the romantic elements which characterized the enthusiastic autobiography of the seventeenth century. The concept of transcendence continues, but with less emphasis, and is supplemented by a renewed sense of God within. One of the most delightful and naïve expressions of this dual conception of the Deity is given in a letter written to Wesley by a poor woman in a workhouse. She says:

I am still unwilling to take anything from anybody. I work out of choice, having never yet learned how a woman can be idle and innocent. I have had as blessed times in my soul sitting at work as ever I had in my life, especially in the nighttime, when I see nothing but the light of a candle and a white cloth, hear nothing but the sound of my own breath, with God in my sight and heaven in my soul, I think myself one of the happiest creatures below the skies. I do not complain that God has not made me some fine thing, to be set up and gazed at; but I can heartily bless Him that He has made me just what I am, a creature capable of enjoyment of Himself. If I go to the window and look out, I see the moon and stars; I meditate a while on the silence of the night, consider this world as a beautiful structure, and the work of an almighty hand; then I sit down to work again, and think myself one of the happiest beings in it.¹⁰

The confidence in the divine afflatus which was accorded such free indulgence in the enthusiastic autobiography was greatly modified by the steady opposition of Methodist leadership to extraordinary revelations. On the other hand, there was no suppression of discussion and analysis of manifestations of the supernatural. A

curious attitude of scientific open-mindedness characterized Wesley's treatment of all such cases. Though reason presided, imagination was given a chance to plead its case, and the verdict which followed often resulted in release for the defendant.

The expression of individual emotions was kept within similar limits. Not every emotion was divinely inspired; hence, several criteria were consulted: doctrinal statement, institutional practice, group opinion, and common sense.

One of the most notable features of the literature produced by the Methodist revival is the re-enhancement of the self. No stifling spirit of anti-rationalism is to be found here. Man's dignity and trustworthiness is deeply felt, for the self in union with God is trusted. The discovery of unknown potentialities provokes the desire to "tell all about one's self," and the autobiographical impulse becomes active. Though the diary was privately kept for the purpose of self-examination, the journal was prepared for publication to share the joy of self-discovery. The ubiquity of the first personal pronoun in the hymn and the confession indicates the spread of the autobiographical impulse throughout all Methodist literature.

Perhaps the closest relationship of Methodism to nascent romanticism is to be seen in the removal of social barriers to the free expression of the autobiographical impulse. Methodism began this work where seventeenth century enthusiasm left off, but safeguarded its results by group control and a certain amount of autocratic supervision on Wesley's part. It took into account the problem of illiteracy and met it by offering training in leadership, by fighting the obscurantist theory of learning, and by controlling literary output through editorial supervision. It was regulative and educative, recognizing the law of social evolution. It bred self-confidence with-

¹⁰ *Arminian Magazine*, II, p. 42.

out encouraging the arrogance of ignorance. Hence the autobiographer while approaching his literary task with confidence, carried a consciousness of certain requirements to be met. Perhaps the most important of these was a pattern of style which was constantly held before him in his work as speaker and writer.

If Wesley made any direct contribution to romantic literary theory, it was by way of his discovery of the beauties of the plain style. He was looking for truth, and he felt that he must see it naked, unadorned by the conventional verbiage. For this reason the style of unlettered people interested him greatly. The Methodist letters and journals, which he chose for publication, out of the mass of autobiographical material which came to his hand, were almost entirely from the pens of such persons. His prefaces to these volumes give a clear indication of his feeling of discovery and his unqualified admiration for the unconventional style. There is, for example, his description of the diction of Mary Gilbert, a seventeen-year old girl, whose journal he edited. Her language, he says, "although plain and altogether unstudied, is pure and terse in the highest degree—yea, frequently elegant; such as the most polite either of our lawyers or divines would not easily alter for the better."¹¹

The style of Jane Cooper, a servant-maid, whose letters he issued, he describes as

"not only simple and artless in the highest degree, but likewise clear, lively, proper: every phrase, every word, being so well chosen, yea, and so well placed, that it is not easy to mend it. And such an inexpressible sweetness runs through the whole, as art would in vain strive to imitate."¹²

The most striking demonstration of his enthusiasm for the "native colours" of the untutored style comes in

his preface to the letters of Mrs. Le-fevre, an early Methodist, whose correspondence had been previously printed by another editor with an apology for their rhetorical inaccuracies. "Their merit," said the first editor, does not consist "in the fineness of the language, nor in the elegance of the manner." But Wesley disagrees with this estimate and declares, "I am not ashamed to recommend them as patterns of true polite epistolary correspondence, expressing the noblest sentiments in the most elegant manner, in the purest, yea, and finest language."¹³

When it is recalled that the first ideal of style held by the eighteenth century was the employment of a universal language such as conformed to the usage of a cultured society, the radical nature of Wesley's encomiums will be recognized. He was one of the early condemners of stock diction in poetry. Quayle in his book on *Poetic Diction* conjectures that the demand of the revival for "a mode of expression severe in its simplicity" brought forth in the hymns "a more natural mode of expression," and goes so far as to suggest that this practice in hymnology "gave to Wordsworth a starting point when he began to expound and develop his theories concerning the language of poetry."¹⁵ If all of Wesley's comments upon style were gathered together and analysed, he would be recognized as a precursor of both the essayists and the poets of the romantic era.

Another idea with revolutionary implications which Wesley seems to have received from his examination of the self-revelations made by the lowly was that the humble man who enters upon his search for religious truth unhampered by prepossessions may make val-

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 550-51.

¹⁴ See Chapter V, note 6.

¹⁵ Thomas Quayle, *Poetic Diction* (London, 1924), p. 50.

¹¹ Wesley, *Works*, VII, p. 551.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 541.

uable discoveries and describe them with convincing power. Of the contents of Jane Cooper's letters he wrote in his preface:

All here is strong sterling sense, strictly agreeable to sound reason. . . . The sentiments are all just and noble; the result of a fine natural understanding, cultivated by conversation, thinking, reading and true Christian experience. At the same time they show a heart as well improved as the understanding, truly devoted to God, and filled in a very uncommon degree, with the entire fruit of his Spirit.¹⁶

With these "almost inimitable letters" he compared the *Journal* of Mary Gilbert who, he says, "set down, from time to time, merely for her own use, just what occurred between God and her own soul." Her reflections, he finds, "are always just, frequently strong and affecting; particularly those on death, or the shortness of life; especially from the mouth of a child."¹⁷

These effusions were not written in 1798 by a Wordsworthian who had just read "We Are Seven," but by a conservative Tory, who concluded after thirty years of experiment with popular autobiography that he could trust the sanctified understanding of the lowly and unsophisticated. He assumes, with a confidence rare in this period, the sure reliability of accounts which issue from humble men and women when they are animated purely by the desire to set down in a "plain way" a record of their souls communion with God. Certainly Wesley began his ministry to the lowly with no prepossessions concerning their capacity for lofty sentiments. He distrusted the "enthusiastic" utterance, he opposed the obscurantism of the lay-preacher, and he exercised vigorous, almost tyrannical, control over their publications. Yet, by 1768, after thirty years of open-minded observation of the autobiographical records, he let them testify for themselves, and that

evidence led him to conclusions that correlated closely with current theories having other origins.

Various versions of primitivism were by this time widely disseminated. Wesley may once have held a primitivistic interpretation of the American Indian. But actual experience in America brought his realistic mind to reject that illusion. He came to scoff at the idealisation of the rustic, whose life he thought was supremely dull and "usually unhappy." It seems likely then that his glorification of rustic genius finds its source in his inductive inquiry rather than in any adoption of a popular belief.

The relationship between the Wesleyan elements in early Methodist autobiography and the new literary ideas that were evolving contemporaneously may now be summarized. If the romantic movement be considered "a direct historical outgrowth of eighteenth century sentimentalism,"¹⁷ then Wesleyanism contributed little toward a new literature. Wesley's realistic view of human nature and his consistent interpretation of orthodox doctrine, particularly the doctrine of original sin, offered a resolute contradiction to all the implications of the sentimental belief in natural goodness. The major objective among early Methodists, in the practice of introspection, was an analysis of inner sin rather than a discovery of inner light or a romantic idealization of impulse; and the Wesleyan doctrine of perfection, though an expression of the growing moral idealism of the century, cannot be identified with other perfectionists, because of its foundation in orthodox tradition and doctrine. Even though it emphasized experience more than doctrine, Methodism did not originate in a liberal theology.

However, if pre-romanticism be considered one of the repercussions of the collapse of rationalism, then Method-

¹⁶ Wesley, *Works*, VII, p. 541.

¹⁷ See Fairchild, *op. cit.*, p. 574.

ism contributed much to a new literature, for it took out of the hands of the rationalists the theory of universalism, the chief argument that had been used in support of the claims of reason, and used it to support the claims of intuition. The strength of the defense of intuition lay in the appeal made by Wesley to the facts of religious experience, facts which form the nucleus of religious autobiography. In his appeal to facts he satisfied not only the believers in tradition and orthodoxy, but he allied himself with the foremost philosophical movement of his day, empiricism. His examination of religious experience led, first of all, to a re-establishment of intuition as one of the guides to knowledge; there developed, in consequence, a fresh interest in the inner world; this in turn produced new conceptions of the functions of self-study and self-history. The respect for the self was enhanced, and the efforts of all men, even the lowly, to express their intuitions were regarded as significant. Their sentiments and their style, when approached empirically, were seen to possess intrinsic worth. Professor Beatty describes the dispersion of Methodist influence as follows:

This movement did much more than produce Methodism in the narrower sense of the word: it freed emotion, enthusiasm, and sentiment; it turned the attention of even the most ordinary man to the world within him and gave a dignity to the most common human soul; and how many who knew nothing of the mysteries of justification by faith and the witness of the spirit gave to the intuitions a glow and credibility that came from the doctrines of the new sect. . . . The habit of introspection was spread abroad; and the subjective poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge is an important fact not only in itself, but for the whole period, because these poets were the formative influences of their time. The consciousness of the religious world within led to the discovery of the poetic world within.¹⁸

A brief statement concerning the

¹⁸ Arthur Beatty (ed), *Romantic Poetry of the Early Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1928), pp. VIII-IX.

recognition given by the early romantics to the elements which characterized Methodist autobiography will throw further light upon the nature and degree of Methodist influence. A recent study by Frederick C. Gill of *The Romantic Movement and Methodism* offers documentation upon the reactions of Cowper, Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge to the Revival. The chief value of the study lies in this collection of specific references; his conclusions are too broadly generalized and too remotely connected with Wesley's ideational background to be entirely trustworthy.

Cowper's indebtedness to the Evangelical movement has been so often discussed and is so well known that we shall not include the data upon him. Four references from Blake furnish considerable insight, not only into the elements of Methodism which impressed Blake, but also into the intricacies of his own thought. In the first reference, Blake stresses Wesley's gospel of faith in God revealed as Christ:

And these are the cries of the Churches before
the two Witnesses: (Wesley and White-
field)
Faith in God the dear Saviour who took on the
likeness of men,
Becoming obedient to death, even the death of
the Cross . . . ¹⁹

In the second, Wesley is presented as a modern miracle, who devoted his "life's whole comfort to intire scorn & death." He was not, says Blake, an Idiot nor a Madman. The third reference comes in an indictment of Deism, where the same distinction as we have emphasized is made: that the Methodist, in his attitude toward sin, neither professed to be "holier than others," nor to be "naturally good." It is the Deists, says Blake, men like Rousseau and Voltaire, who are the hypocrites. He anathematizes them thus:

¹⁹ Quoted in Gill, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

You cannot escape my charge that you are Pharisees & Hypocrites, for you are constantly talking of the Virtues of the Human Heart and particularly of your own, that you may accuse others, & especially the Religious, whose errors you, by this display of pretended Virtue, chiefly design to expose. Rousseau thought men Good by Nature: he found them Evil and he found no friend. Friendship cannot exist without Forgiveness of Sins continually.²⁰

The fourth reference is more general, identifying Whitefield and Hervey with mystics like Fenelon and Mme. Guyon:

Fenelon, Guyon, Teresa,
Whitefield & Hervey guard that gate, with all
the gentle Souls Who guide the great Wine-
press of Love.²¹

It is noteworthy that the features of Wesleyanism selected by Blake, namely, the renewal of a vital faith, the sense of mystery aroused by a religion which annihilates self-interest, the genuineness of the type of perfection professed by Methodists in contrast to the sentimental profession of goodness, and the cardinal element of love in Methodist doctrine, constitute the very heart of the early Methodist message. If this selection might be taken as representative of the points of contact between Methodism and early romanticism we might conclude that the impact was immediate and powerful. But Blake is, of course, too much in a class by himself and too little known in his century to be taken as typical. Nevertheless, it is probable that the features of Wesleyanism that impressed him impressed many and that the interpretation he gave them is in keeping with the sense of many who were rejecting the tenets of natural religion.

In the case of Wordsworth, Gill finds no direct references to Methodism. He emphasizes rather his employment of the doctrinal phraseology and

concepts made current by the movement. He quotes, for example, from one of Wordsworth's "Inscriptions," the following:

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;
Thy smile is sure, Thy plighted word
No change can falsify!

I bent before Thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;
And peace was given—nor peace alone,
But Faith sublimed to ecstasy.²²

His references from "The Excursion" in evidence of "the language of the Evangelical revival" are many. The following is typical:

The law of faith
Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,
Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve!
Almighty Lord, Thy further grace impart!
And with that help the wonder shall be seen
Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and Thy praise
Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.²³

These are interesting echoes of Methodism as it became diffused through all English thought while the Evangelical movement spread, but, at the best, they are echoes, for Wordsworth, we are assured by those who know him well, was not greatly in sympathy with Evangelicalism. The only notable feature implicit in Gill's chosen passages is the emphasis upon faith, working through love, and producing joy. This concept of religion certainly indicates the result of the pervasive influence of the Wesleyan message upon the thought of Wordsworth's generation. No further proof need be given in demonstration of the change that had come over the approach to religion than simply to contrast, with the above passage, a selection from the *Essay on Man* which to Pope's generation epitomised their conception of man's relation to God:

²⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 150.

²¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 150.

²² Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 165.

²³ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 166.

Say first, of God above or man below,
 What can we reason but from what we know?
 Of man what see but his station here,
 From which to reason, or to which refer?
 Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
 'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
 He who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
 See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
 Observe how system into system runs,
 What other planets circle other suns,
 What varied being peoples ev'ry star,
 May tell why Heav'n has made us what we are.
 But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
 The strong connections, nice dependencies,
 Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
 Look'd thro'? or can a part contain the whole?
 Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
 And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee?²⁴

Coleridge's references to Wesley are so definite and so numerous that a conclusive statement can be made concerning the value which he placed upon the elements which went into the shaping of Methodist autobiography. In the first place, he was familiar with both the lives of the early preachers and the life of Wesley as interpreted by Southey. He considered the lives of the preachers models of popular autobiography. "In 1797," says Gill, "Coleridge began a series of letters to his friend, Thomas Poole, in which he proposed to give an account of his life up to that time. Five only of these letters were written, for they stop short at Cambridge. But their importance for us is that in them Coleridge proposes, and also proceeds, to imitate the autobiographical method of the early Methodist preachers. He writes:

'My dear Poole, I could inform the duller author how he might write an interesting book. Let him relate the events of his own life with honesty, not disguising the feelings that accompanied them. I never yet read even a Methodist's "Experience" in the *Gospel Magazine* without receiving instruction and amusement.'

And Coleridge proceeds to relate plainly and simply the story of his birth, ancestry, sins, and fears. . . .²⁵

²⁴ Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Man," 11. 17-32.

²⁵ Gill, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Not many people know that Southey's *Life of Wesley* was the most cherished of all the volumes that ever received in their margins the famous annotations by S. T. C. The reprint by the Oxford press of this annotated two-volume biography makes it available to all who would know Coleridge's musings as he read. Twice he expressed his fondness for the book. In a footnote he wrote:

Oh, dear and honored Southey! this is the favorite of my library among many favorites, this the book which I can read for the twentieth time with delight, when I can read nothing else at all. . . .²⁶

And on the fly-leaf he inscribed the following memento:

It is my desire and request that this work should be presented to its Donor and Author, Robert Southey, after my death. The substance and character of the marginal notations will abundantly prove the absence of any such intention in my mind at the time they were written. But it will not be uninteresting to him to know, that the one or the other volume was the book more often in my hands than any other in my ragged book-regiment. . . . How many and many an hour of self-oblivion do I owe to this *Life of Wesley*; and how often have I argued with it, questioned, remonstrated, been peevish, and asked pardon—then again listened and cried, Right! Excellent!—and in yet heavier hours entreated it, as it were, to continue talking to me—for that I heard and listened, and was soothed, though I could make no reply.²⁷

The mingled emotions with which he responded to the Wesleyan message are suggested here as well as in various notes scattered through the two volumes.

One point upon which Coleridge, along with Blake and Wordsworth, was in perfect agreement was his treatment of faith. Southey paraphrases a passage from Wesley's anti-deistic pamphlet, the "Letter to the Rev. Dr. Middleton"²⁸ in the following manner:

²⁶ Southey, *op. cit.*, I, p. 199.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I, fly-leaf.

²⁸ See Chapter III, note 71.

The historical evidence of revelation, strong and clear as it is, is cognizable by men of learning alone; but this is plain, simple, and level to the lowest capacity. The sum is, 'One thing I know: I was blind, but now I see;' an argument of which a peasant, a woman, a child, may feel all the force. The traditional evidence gives an account of what was transacted far away, and long ago. The inward evidence is intimately present to all persons, at all times, and in all places. 'It is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, if thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ.' *This, then, is the record, this is the evidence, emphatically so called, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

Why, then, have not all men this faith? Because no man is able to work it in himself: it is a word of Omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation; and none can create a soul anew, but He who at first created the heavens and the earth. May not your own experience teach you this? said Wesley. Can you give yourself this faith? Is it in your power to see, to hear, or taste, or feel God?—to raise in yourself any perception of God, or of an invisible world?—... You know it is not. You not only do not but can not (by your own strength), thus believe.²⁹

Coleridge annotated this passage thus:

I venture to avow it as my conviction, that either Christian faith is what Wesley here describes, or there is no proper meaning in the world. It is either the identity of the reason and the will (the proper spiritual part of man), in the full energy of each, consequent on a divine rekindling, or it is not at all. Faith is as *real* as life; as actual as force; as effectual as volition. It is the physics of the moral being, no less than it is the physics or morale of the zoo-physical.³⁰

Elsewhere Coleridge writes of faith as 'the perfection of intelligence' and 'the continuance of reason's horizon.'³¹

Of the Methodist practices which he deemed enthusiastic Coleridge was highly critical. He constantly struggled as he read, if one may judge from his notes, to distinguish between what in the movement might be superstition or enthusiasm and what undeniably was religious truth. He quarreled not

alone with Wesley but also with Southey's interpretation of the movement, for he felt that often Southey missed the full meaning of the Wesleyan message. He even states that he hesitates to recommend the wide circulation of the biography for this reason. His final evaluation of Methodism is as follows:

... that the 'evangelical' principles have borne fruits of righteousness, however imperfect, however largely mingled with a blighted and corrupted produce, is sufficient to show that they do to a certain extent deserve their name, and are in the main directly opposed to an anti-Christian rationalism.³²

The great attraction, therefore, for Coleridge in Wesleyan principles and Wesleyan literature was the antithesis they offered to the passing age of reason and the effective answer they afforded to rationalism in their direct appeal to a deep and vital faith. Coleridge's only criticism of Wesley's personal faith throws light on the wide temperamental differences between the two men. To Coleridge Wesley's faith lacks the quality of mysticism; the processes of logic are too much in evidence. When one thinks of the complex of Platonism, Unitarianism and Transcendentalism, (to mention only obvious elements in his thought), which determined the quality of Coleridge's faith, one can understand why he concludes concerning Wesley:

I am persuaded that Wesley never rose above the region of logic and strong volition. The moment an idea presents itself to him, his understanding intervenes to eclipse it, and he substitutes a conception by some process of deduction. Nothing is immediate to him.³⁴

Wesley in response would probably have said, as did Carlyle, of Cole-

²⁹ Southey, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 71-72.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 72, fn.

³¹ Quoted in Gill, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

³² See Coleridge's discussion of Southey's interpretation of Wesley's teaching upon the subject of eternal punishment, Southey, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 299-300.

³³ Quoted in Gill, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

³⁴ Southey, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

ridge's ideas, "recognizable as pious, though strangely colored,"³⁵ and added perhaps by heterodoxical mysticism.

As we compare these references from Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge, we find the emphasis chiefly upon the place of faith or intuition in the Wesleyan message. It would seem then that at the end of the eighteenth century, with Methodism rapidly becoming another of the "respectable" bodies, and, with romanticism coming to the front with a new literary manifesto, Wesleyanism represented to the young intellectuals of the day, above all else, a successful disavowal of anti-Christian rationalism and a practical demonstration of the return of intuition to its place of honor. Even when deploring the excesses of the il-

literate masses, and failing to recognize the great contribution which Methodism was making to the progress of democracy, even when rejecting certain aspects of the doctrine of assurance, particularly its basis in the theory of original sin, the young romantics deemed sound the central element, the reliance upon the inner consciousness of God, rather than upon reason or the objective evidence of God's being. Coleridge's statement may be quoted as representative of generally accepted opinion:

Men of the Wesleyan school, from Wesley's day to the present, have rather been depreciators of reason, than exaggerators of intellectual efficiency; they dwell on faith as the work of the Spirit; and chiefly rely on a bold plain urgent preaching of the word—a direct assertion of the truth, not proofs and arguments in its favour.³⁶

³⁵ Quoted in Fairchild, *op. cit.*, p. 550.

³⁶ Quoted in Gill, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

Book Reviews

The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament. Thomas A. Nelson and Sons, New York 1946. pp. 553. \$2.00.

The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published in February of 1946 by Thomas A. Nelson and Sons. The work of translation was carried on under the direction of the International Council of Religious Education by a Committee of some of the most outstanding New Testament scholars of America. It was sponsored by forty major Protestant denominations. In time, the Old Testament which is being worked on by a separate committee, will be published. The work of the committee began in 1930 and was suspended in 1932. In 1937, with the provision of the necessary budget, the work was undertaken again.

The task set before the revision committee by the International Council is stated in the following authorization: "There is need for a version which embodies the best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures, and expresses this meaning in English diction which is designed for use in public and private worship and preserves those qualities which have given to the King James Version a supreme place in English Literature. We, therefore, define the task of the American Standard Bible Committee to be that of revision of the present American Standard Bible in the light of the results of modern scholarship, this revision to be designed for use in public and private worship, and to be in the direction of the simple, classic English style of the King James Version."

Dean Luther A. Weigle, of Yale Divinity School, chairman of the com-

mittee, indicates three reasons for undertaking such a comprehensive revision. The English Revised and American Standard Versions lost much of the beauty and force of the King James Version because of an effort at mechanical exactness, literalness and a word for word translation, which follows the order of the Greek words so far as this is possible. The result was a version "strong in Greek, weak in English." Secondly, Biblical scholars are better equipped today, not only to determine the original text of the Greek New Testament but also to understand its language. This of course is made possible through discoveries in the fields of the manuscripts as well as in Greek papyri. And, thirdly, the Bible being the Word of God to men, needs to be written in the language of the men to whom it comes. This word, therefore, must not be translated in ancient phrases which in many instances have changed or lost their meaning.

On the whole, the New Testament committee has done a most commendable piece of work. There are many fine features which are immediately noticeable. The volume appears in a most satisfactory format. The type is clear, making for easy reading. The pages are of good size and the paragraphing is on the whole satisfactory and logical. The present edition is attractively bound in light blue cloth. A leather-bound edition of the New Testament is promised in June 1946.

Some significant improvements over the King James Version and the American Standard Version too numerous to mention in a brief review, are most acceptable. Corrections of erroneous translations found in both the K. J. V. and the A. S. V. will please the critical

reader. Improvements in translation are found on almost every page. On the whole there is no net loss in the new translation so far as any of the historic doctrines of the church are concerned. Readers who are acquainted with the principles of textual criticism as they relate to the New Testament text will find much to praise and little to blame. On the whole the critical principles followed in dealing with variants are acceptable though conservative scholarship will find some points of disagreement. There is perhaps a little too much departure from the principles laid down by Westcott and Hort, which principles have been held by some members of the present revision committee, notably Dr. A. T. Robertson of Louisville. (See his *Introduction to Textual Criticism of the New Testament*.) This departure has led to the acceptance of certain variant readings which some will feel weaken the revision.

Exception will undoubtedly be taken by many with reference to what may seem to be a rather arbitrary handling of the article in certain passages. It may seem that interpretation has been engaged in rather than translation at times. Others will question the use of the more intimate pronouns for Christ whereas the more sacred forms of "thee," "thou," etc., are used for God. The translation of "kurios" by "sir" will be displeasing to many though there is little doubt but that this is correct in many instances. To conclude, however, that the Revisers are opposed to the doctrine of Christ's deity would be erroneous. Criticism may be leveled on the basis of a word order which at times fails to reproduce the thought of the Apostle Paul and others.

Those who hold to the Wesleyan Arminian conception of "entire sanctification" will raise some questions with reference to the use of *consecration* instead of *sanctification* in certain passages. The change to *consecrate* in John 17:17, 19 seems to be most un-

fortunate in that particular context since separation from the world is indicated as an already accomplished fact in 17:16. Again in I Thess. 4:7 *consecration* is quite inadequate to express what Paul had in mind as the antithesis of uncleanness. *Holiness* as used in the K. J. V. or *sanctification* as used in the A. S. V. are undoubtedly more appropriate. Close observation will evince the fact that this is not done in every case. Ideas of cleansing, freedom from sin and perfection are preserved quite clearly and fully.

While there is without doubt ground for criticism in some particulars there is also much that is praiseworthy in the new version. It will have a wide reading and use but will not in our opinion supplant either the King James or the American Standard versions.

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Nature and Values, by Edgar Sheffield Brightman. (The Fondren Lectures for 1945.) New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 171 pp. \$1.50.

In the opening chapter, "Two Worlds," our author poses the problem he would solve. It is the problem of dualism which causes strife in the various phases of human activity. Brightman refers to two fundamental dualisms: body and mind; nature and values. There have been and are the two basic lines of synthesis: namely, materialism (or naturalism) and idealism and to the consideration of these Brightman now sets himself.

Before coming to grips with his problem of nature and values two very valuable chapters are inserted on the definition of nature and personality. After carefully coming to the conclusion that nature is "what is perceived by sense" Brightman then proceeds to

make the following further definition. "If the natural is what is manifested to the senses, all experience other than the sensory is properly to be regarded as experience of the supernatural" (p. 46). In chapter three, personality is defined (p. 53) and its qualities then discussed. Personality is implied in all scientific observation; is larger than nature in that it includes sensations plus memory, values, self-consciousness, etc.; interacts with nature; is invisible; self-identifying by means of memory; and is in social communication with other personalities.

The chapter "The World of Values" is a rather standard Personalistic discussion of this subject indicating the difference between instrumental and intrinsic values and listing reason and love as the two fixed values generally recognized though often in a distorted form.

Chapters V and VI discussing Naturalism and Personalism respectively are the crucial parts of the book. Naturalism is criticized on three points: first, it is too abstract inasmuch as nature is drawn off from value and the latter subordinated; second, it places certainly above adequacy in its reliance on mere sensory verification without finding a rational synthesis; and, third, it tends to restrict experiment to the realm of natural science avoiding the dimensional depth of spirit and values.

Brightman asserts the superiority of Personalism on the grounds that it is more empirical, more inclusive, more social, equally scientific, and more religious. (He presents traditional arguments for metaphysical idealism but hastens on to distinguish between Personalism and Absolute Idealism and takes time to refute also the Scholastic doctrine of substance.)

In the last chapter the corollaries of Personalism are presented in the form of a philosophy of life whose first principles are: respect for personality, interpretation of nature as a revelation of personality, and spiritual liberty.

In the opinion of this reviewer the book exhibits all the excellencies for which he has always respected his former teacher: erudition, clarity, precise writing, logical thinking and religious fervor. All Dr. Brightman's writings could be entitled: *On Being a Real Personalist*. That is their strength and that their weakness. They are cogent refutations of Naturalism and Neo-Realism. But these are the questions we would ask Dr. Brightman: How can a person who has no abiding soul-substance identify himself as the same person from day to day? If the mind can refer, in its epistemological dualism, to something beyond its idea why could this something, Brightman really knows not what, not be of a different stuff from personality, even divine Personality? How can Dr. Brightman honestly square his view of the supernatural with the traditional belief of the Methodist Church? Or any Christian symbol? Because nature is known through consciousness, is ordered and purposive, are we justified in the conclusion that it is therefore of the nature of mind? Can you say there is no mind in our bodies because we cannot find it with our senses (p. 124)? Can we find our consciousness which is believed to be "in" our body?

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Justice and the Social Order, Emil Brunner (translated by Mary Hottinger). New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1945. x, 304 pp. \$3.00.

The problem of might versus right, with which Jeremiah and Habakkuk struggled, comes into focus in the most recent work of this noted Swiss theologian. The task, to which the author sets himself, is described as a pioneer venture in the direction of interpreting the "classical and Christian

idea of justice" and applying its principles to contemporary social institutions.

The classical ideal of justice is passed over hastily. While Aristotle is consulted, no cognizance is taken of Hesiod, or Solon, and but little of Plato. The classic description by Thucydides of the Melian conference, with its debate over unjust imperialism, is ignored.

As Brunner points out, the Machiavellian ethic of the "justice" of arbitrary force has, for the first time in modern history, been the guiding policy of a great state. This was possible because of the breakdown of the Christian conviction of the Kingdom of Heaven which began in the Renaissance and culminated in logical positivism. One may add that the revolt from religious authority ended in the most abject subjection to political authority. This international anarchy, Brunner holds to be "the inevitable result of man's loss of faith in a divine law, in an eternal justice."

Either there is a valid criterion, a justice which stands above us all, a challenge presented to us, not by us, a standard rule of justice binding on every state and every system of law, or there is no justice, but only power organized in one fashion or another and setting itself up as law. (p. 8)

The first task is to ascertain the fact of an absolute standard of justice and the second is to define and apply it. "Nothing can be measured with an elastic yardstick."

The author distinguishes, however, between the ideal and the possible. A certain flexibility in the absolute law is necessary to insure justice to individual cases, since a rigid rule of equality may defeat its own purpose. There is thus a certain relativity within justice itself, avoiding the extremes of "a feeble opportunism or a fanatical dogmatism."

For this fixed standard of justice the Bible is consulted. The Old Testament is more specific, Brunner finds, but it is inapplicable to our times be-

cause no distinction is made between political imperialism and "a universal religious mission"—(p. 227). Apparently he finds no hint of such a distinction in the latter chapters of *Isaiah*, for instance. The New Testament also has a limited usefulness because it speaks only of personal relations and sees the church as only a small group that despairs of a Christian social order and holds citizenship only in heaven. Had Brunner been able to regard both Old and New Testaments as an inspired revelation he could have taken principles from both and used them as a fixed "yardstick" on the present world order, thus confronting the relativity of positivism with an unconditional moral standard. The principle which he does find valid is that of a redemptive love which aims at justice for all.

An excess of that freedom, for which positivism contends, leads to anarchy; an excess of law, for which authoritarianism contends, leads to totalitarianism; the ideal is found, as Brunner rightly insists, in the fulfilling of the law of love. Love is based upon justice but transcends it; love alone will safeguard justice. The hope of the world lies in the direction of the application of Christian love to family, state, and international relationships; this begins in individual "rebirth" through the "spirit of the Gospels."

The book is a courageous, penetrating, and invigorating indictment of modernity, and an imperious challenge to a fresh study of an age-old problem. The reviewer feels, however, that he grasps desperately a somewhat nebulous standard of justice. He fancies that he is in essential agreement with the reformers without their faith in the infallibility of the Bible or their inner assurance of its truth as witnessed by the Holy Spirit. The merits of the book far exceed its limitations. The author has accomplished the major portion of his task—the definition

of the end for which science has furnished such ample means.

GEORGE A. TURNER

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The Christian Answer. Edited, with an introduction by Henry P. Van Dusen. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945. xii, 195 pages. \$1.50.

This symposium-volume has grown out of two years of discussion and criticisms of preliminary papers presented to "The Theological Discussion Group." It consists of five chapters, one by each of the following: Paul J. Tillich, Theodore M. Greene, George F. Thomas, Edwin E. Aubrey, and John Knox. The title indicates the hope of the panel of authors to present a unified answer, in the name of Christianity, to the complex of issues which form the present scene. Inasmuch as the writers all stand to the left of center, it follows that their attempt to speak for Christendom will not be accepted without prejudice by a great many Christians.

Whatever degree of unity the volume may possess comes largely from the opening chapter by Professor Tillich, entitled "The World Situation" and to which the other writers make frequent reference. In this section, the author develops the thesis that the present world crisis is the outcome of the "rise, triumph and the crisis" of bourgeois society, to which he is allergic. The twentieth century man is held to stand in the third phase of modern history (where have we heard this before?); in the preceding stage *belief in reason* as a guiding principle was supplanted by *technical reason*, so that man's historical existence ceased to be guided by human reason. Our present situation is held to require the discovery of a 'third way' as an alternative to a return either to a reaction-

ary capitalism or to totalitarianism.

The technological advance of our century has given us 'one world' but no proper community, while at the same time the Christian assertion of the "transcendent center of *personal life*" has lost its power over the mind of modern man. To reinstate the essentially religious values of personality and community, Professor Tillich asserts that there must be effected a unity of existential truth and rational truth upon the basis of a development of Christianity "toward an inclusive reality which unites different existential interpretations as far as they are compatible with each other and with Christian principles." (p. 33)

Theodore M. Greene, in his chapter entitled "Christianity and its Secular Alternatives" deals with three common attitudes of secularism toward the Christian message: (1) that of the average man; (2) that of the naturalist; and (3) that of the humanist. He sees the common man as discouraged, the naturalist as antagonistic, and the humanist as honestly skeptical. Favorable comment is deserved at the point of his analysis of Sidney Hook's article, "The New Failure of Nerve" in the *Partisan Review* of January-February, 1943.

His treatment of the topics of "The Supernatural," "Revelation," "Reason, Faith, and Dogma," "Original Sin," and "The Church" are intended to convince naturalists and humanists that the Christian claims are at least not frivolous. This prepares the way for George F. Thomas' chapter, "Central Christian Affirmations" which is at the same time illuminating and highly unsatisfactory from the point of view of conservative theology. Dr. Thomas seeks to conserve the values of traditional theism, while at the same time retaining every significant position held by theological liberalism.

Edwin E. Aubrey, under chapter title "Christianity and Society," develops the thesis that the social bearings of the Christian message may be

understood in terms of four key ideas: security, unity, freedom, and significance. He continues the emphasis of Dr. Tillich, that rationalism and vitalism are alike inadequate as principles for the understanding of human nature. He proposes as a substitute the 'principle' of the 'spirit of God' and suggests that in the Gospel alone can be found the meaning of history.

The concluding section, "Christianity and the Christian" by John Knox deals primarily with the moral problems which confront the Christian in society. The analysis proposed centers in the sociological problem created by the complexity of man's moral situation as it is complicated by "human sinfulness." The author's definition of this latter term is not completely clear, but in some statements he seems to indicate that it lies chiefly in the fact that we are human. This point of view is hardly original, and seems to us debatable.

The way out of the difficulty is, to Professor Knox, through new resources which come to us by virtue of our 'reconciliation.' He shares the views of Professor Thomas, in the interpretation of the atonement in terms essentially the same as those of the traditional 'moral influence' theories. It is upon the basis of a disclosure of something which has always been true that the atonement is held to center; little place is given for an objective alteration of the God-man relationship in the Cross. In this, Dr. Knox is in harmony with the general trend of the volume, which is decidedly to the left in economics, politics, and theology.

HAROLD B. KUHN

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The Meaning of Human Experience,
by Lynn Harold Hough. New
York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.
1945. 368 pages. \$3.00.

"The Meaning of Human Experi-

ence" is the crowning contribution to good thinking by one of the most learned and acceptable of our modern Christian writers. It isn't the prophetic writing; the fire is lacking; it isn't the priest; the evangelical urge is insufficient; but it is, what is equally important, a Christian builder of ideas making a masterful effort to bring the best in human thinking into a reasonable synthesis with the fundamentals of the Christian tradition.

The Meaning of Human Experience is divided into four general divisions, each following in historical and progressive sequence. The First Division is a foundation in "Basic Considerations." Dr. Hough presents the fundamental nature of man in his varied attitudes and essential personal and social qualities. His review is more of a psychological inventory of basic human equipments rather than an arrangement in evolutionary progression. He also presents the "Ultimate Person" in Christ as a basic consideration. He then wisely accepts the Great Person of God the First Cause as creatively responsible for the Cosmic Order and the magnificent organization of the vast world structure.

In his Second Division, which he calls the "Hebrew-Christian Witness," Dr. Hough reviews the rise and increasing power of the Hebrew-Christian influence. He carries this forward from the call of Abraham to the present, not only as one increasing purpose of God in His Cosmic Plan, but also as the real foundation for all that is best in human civilization itself. He carries this "Witness" not only to the Great Redemption and to the Kingdom Apocalyptic continuation, but he very felicitously completes the Division with a widely appealing presentation of Theology as "The Queen of the Sciences."

The Third Division presents an interesting review of the "Humanistic Tradition." This is one of Dr. Hough's special fields of research and critical appreciation. He sympathetically re-

views the Greek foundations in truthful thinking; and follows the enlarging and rectifying process in outstanding personalities down to our modern men. His personal critical commitments reach a high point of approval in Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer Moore. He does not stop with these critics from many countries however, but continues an incisive appraisal of fiction, poetry, biography and history as studies in humanistic trends.

Dr. Hough in the Fourth Division makes a very praiseworthy effort to bring the "Hebrew-Christian" Witness and the "Humanistic Tradition" into what he calls "The Evangelical Synthesis." He may be insufficiently realistic, or over optimistic, in asserting that all these streams flow together in a trustworthy synthesis, but he is consistent in the underlying spirit of the book, in believing that all truth is interrelated. Dr. Hough does not bring into this Synthesis any contributing influence that might dishonor Christianity, or that would change the primary principles of its divinely conditioned truth. He sees with an expertly trained Christian mind that "Man's intelligence has full meaning only when it is seen in the light of divine intelligence.

Human experience and thinking have been so strangely and tragically independent of God. The ancient Thales and the thoughtful early Greeks began an independent scientific study in cosmic explanations because the cosmologies of the anthropomorphic religionists of their day were so unreasonably fantastic. Any fair-minded observer would say that independent human effort was justifiable in the days of Thales and Anaxagoras. But when the highly reasonable Christian Scriptures were revealed and the separate, and often hostile systematizations continued the independent-mindedness had to be attributed to a spirit of self-sufficiency that through the long centuries has led humankind into philosophic wayward-

ness and tragic error. Nothing could be more injurious to human existence than that God and man should be separated. God in Christ took the initiative in bringing about reconciliation; men would have stayed away from Him forever; and it seems that Christians in this day must continue to carry the Divine Gospel of Reconciliation and Truth to those who are going their separate ways in life and thought. In this complex age the process of bringing human thinking back into harmony with Divine Truth is part of the total Kingdom Effort. Dr. Hough has done this, imperfectly but sincerely.

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Psychology of Religion, by Paul E. Johnson. New York and Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1945. 288 pages. \$2.50.

The book, *Psychology of Religion*, by Paul E. Johnson, is a scholarly and scientific treatise on "depth psychology" and man's relationship to God. Dr. Johnson's references to and analyses of numerous current investigations in the fields of religion and psychology convince the reader that this book is far from superficial; rather, one is deeply impressed with the extreme care and discernment exercised by the author in its development. While not exhaustive in its scope, it has balance and proportion in the data analyzed.

For the author, the study of religious experience is in terms of processes and goals. Human beings are interacting units of society. To gain any understanding of personality, we must study people in the numerous social settings in which we find them—the home, school, church. Psychology of religion is dynamic and interpersonal.

The reader is constantly impressed with the stress upon relationships and interactions — truly “gestalt” and social.

The contents of the book fall under ten headings: (1) The Psychological Study of Religion, (2) Religious Experience, (3) Religious Growth, (4) Regenerative Power, (5) Prayer and Devotion, (6) Worship, (7) Psychology of Belief, (8) Religious Behavior, (9) Normal Personality, and (10) The Religious community.

Dr. Johnson insists upon an all-inclusive definition of religion—“Religion is response to a Sustainer of Values.” This Sustainer of Values may be personal or impersonal, human or divine, natural or supernatural, individual or social. With so broad a definition of religion, the human personality may be studied subjectively, (by one’s own introspective analysis) objectively, (the truly scientific or experimental approach) or from the synoptic point of view (comprehensive and all-inclusive).

There are many types of religious experience, but with all are related needs, values, interests, worths. Whenever a felt need arises, dynamic strivings urge the individual toward desired goals. The energy in this striving resides in the emotions. Without dynamic emotional motivation religion is of doubtful value.

Just as the child grows physiologically or anatomically, so too do the religious patterns unfold. In the play life of the child advancing stages are marked by characteristic activities; likewise the religious life has typical expressions at different ages. The author puts no special emphasis on definite crisis experiences; rather he infers there may be many crises in a background of gradual unfoldment.

Prayer and devotion are vital aspects in the religious life of everyone. Prayer can be misused, but when disciplined, it anticipates needs and seeks dynamic resources to fulfill them.

The ritual and symbol may vary

widely from one form of worship to another, but the dominant motif in every one is the search for God as the Creator and Sustainer of Values.

In the chapter on Belief, the author critically appraises a number of experimental studies of differing beliefs among scientists, clergymen, children, etc. He sees in these contrasting concepts not hopeless confusion, but a bulwark of philosophy, with each contributing its part to the whole. No finite mind can comprehend all the range of truth and reality. These fragmentary insights are enlarged by interpersonal sharing.

Religious behavior results from both conscious and unconscious motives. Failure to reach goals brings a sense of guilt. Confession, forgiveness, counseling, and comradeship result in religious adjustments. The attainment of a normal personality is achieved through “an interactive unity of growing experience guided by insight and motivated by purpose to achieve socially desirable goals.” Living abundantly results from service to others. The self-forgetful life is the ideal. Thus, the social function of the church, the dynamic of religious growth is the best development for both the individual and the community.

This volume merits high praise for its scholarly and scientific presentation. However, those who maintain a conservative interpretation of Christianity will be critical of the broad all-inclusive view of religion taken by the author. Dr. Johnson seems to place Christianity on a plane no higher than Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hebraism or any other religion. Christ is presented as a wonderful man and prophet, but a man, nevertheless. We of Christian orthodoxy find Christ to be far more than a mere prophet. He is THE SON OF GOD, DIVINE AS WELL AS HUMAN. The Power of His Living Personality to change a life of sin and inner conflict to one of harmony and radiant vitality is a heartfelt reality to many of us. This seems to be the

note of importance left unemphasized in an otherwise scholarly treatise.

HILDRETH M. CROSS

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Puritanism and Democracy. Ralph Barton Perry. New York: The Vanguard Press. xvi, 688 pp. \$5.00.

This book of 641 pages by the distinguished Harvard professor of philosophy is in answer to the question, "What does it mean to be an American?" To those who have been irked by the flippancy of the "debunkers" it will come with reassurance and comfort. It penetrates to the heart of our heritage and reveals the true ground of our hope to be Christian-puritan democracy. "It is to the eighteenth century that we find ourselves turning again today for our fundamental premises."

The readers of this quarterly will find the author's reappraisal of Puritanism particularly heartening. It has been the fashion to treat Puritanism with such contempt and ridicule that the very name has become a by-word. It has been accused of waging a war of extermination upon every value of life other than salvation. The word has become a synonym in the popular mind of all that is morbid, pessimistic and dreary. Someone has expressed it thus: "Puritanism is the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy."

The author sees more deeply and clearly. He recognizes the Puritan as a thorough-going realist, who is fully alive to the possibilities of evil. Since he is entirely Christian in the "medieval" or traditional sense, he looks not to science or statesmanship for a remedy but to moral regeneration. He is jealous of religious values and thus he becomes suspicious of other and rival values. "He did not deny to na-

ural and worldly pleasure, or to health, or to family affection, or to social welfare, or to beauty and cultural arts, a place in the hierarchy of goods, nor did he exclude them from his life. But in his eagerness to subordinate them he unduly disparaged them." If he seemed to be against the æsthetic, it was because he found that æstheticism tends to seduce from piety.

It has been charged that the Gothic art of the Middle Ages was destroyed by the Puritans. The author challenges the statement and cites evidence against it. It is true that much of that art was destroyed, but he shows that it was due to artistic causes, to changes of technology, craftsmanship and taste. The Catholics had no more regard for ancient remains than others as shown by the fact that they continually plundered the ruins of ancient Rome to provide materials for the building of their churches.

Puritanism and democracy loom large among the ideals embraced within the social heritage of Americans. Puritan ideals came in with the colonizing groups and democratic ideals were acquired before and during the revolutionary period. While Puritanism seemed to breathe the spirit of medieval other-worldliness, and democracy partook of the spirit of the liberalism of the enlightenment, they had much in common and the drift of Puritanism was definitely in the direction of democracy.

Among the fundamental bonds between the practical philosophy of Puritanism and that of democracy may be mentioned the following: the dignity of man; emphasis upon popular education; the equalization of individuals; justification of man's attainment of wealth and earthly happiness; and the same sense of destiny felt by each group as set apart to realize the moral purpose of the world.

It is to be doubted if a more significant book has come off the press in recent years. In its treatment of Puritanism, the book is a profound expo-

sition of colonial theological thought; as regards democracy, it analyzes its content and meaning. In the face of the growing statism and totalitarianisms of our time, it is a significant apologetic and defense.

WILDER R. REYNOLDS

Professor of Church History
Asbury Theological Seminary

Foundations for Reconstruction; D. Elton Trueblood. Harper and Brothers, 1946. 109 p. \$1.00.

Dr. Trueblood writes in a clear, forceful, and penetrating style. The book is interesting reading. The vocabulary is not technical and is geared to the average reader. There is sufficient depth of thought to challenge the critical professional reader.

The book is divided into an introduction and ten short chapters. Each chapter is headed by and is an exposition of one of the Mosaic commandments, commonly referred to as the Ten Commandments. "The Ten Commandments constitute the most memorable and succinct extant formulation of the ethical creed of the West." Dr. Trueblood has given a fresh interpretation to an ever recurring spiritual and social necessity, namely, the moving from pronouncement to practice. The author states that, "Every thoughtful person knows that the major problem of our time is the ethical problem." The insistence is made that the *Basis for Reconstruction* is to be found in the spiritual pole of the world. The statement is made and sustained that Western man is entrenched in his position of authority and power. "He cannot soon be dislodged from the outside. But he might be dislodged from the inside." The threat is one of an internal slow disintegration.

Here are a few of the volume's excellencies. "No matter how powerful we are, and no matter how rich we are in physical resources, we shall decline as a people unless we can produce and

maintain an ethical system that will make our technical discoveries the boon to mankind which they might be. . . ." And again, "To know what is right is important, but to have the power and the courage to do it is far more important. . . ." "If we want to have *One World*, the only way to begin is by the recognition of our dependence on *One God*." The prophets of Israel gave terrific emphasis to the second commandment because it referred to the greatest single danger of their people. "That danger was the danger of an easy tolerance." Again he states, ". . . the serious thinker cannot have any intellectual respect for the merely tolerant man, because the tolerant man is essentially stupid. . . . What the world needs, far more than it needs a fashionable tolerance . . . is a burning faith which can change men's lives."

There are inadequacies too, as there are in any book not reviewed by the author himself. They are in the main chiefly the result of the author having been influenced by a sociological approach to the religious life. The level of treatment is largely on the horizontal level. The transcendental emphasis is largely neglected. How is one to learn to live ethically? Is to "know the right" sufficient to guarantee that one will "do the ethical thing?" Is there not need for the Grace of God to change one's ways from that of Paganism to Judeo-Christianity?

B. JOSEPH MARTIN

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The Infallible Word, A Symposium, by members of the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary, is reviewed editorially in this issue. Turn to page 35.

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